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JANUARY 2016
ISSUE 240



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January 2016 Issue 240

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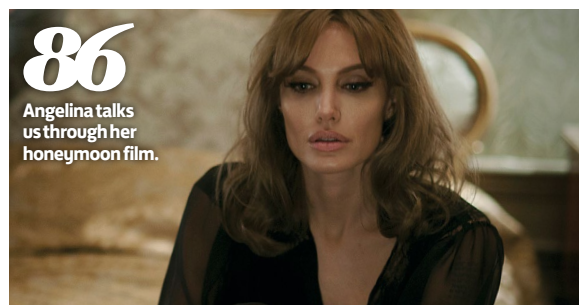
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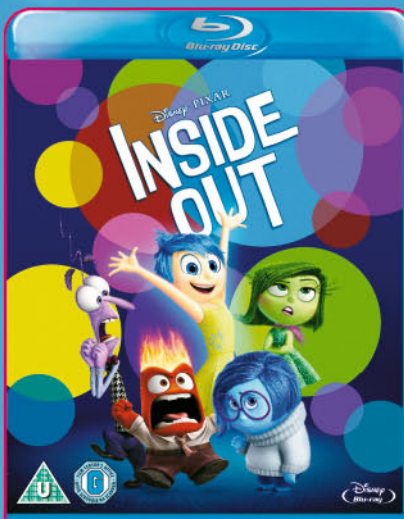
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dialogue

Mail, rants, theories etc...

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The Force is strong in this

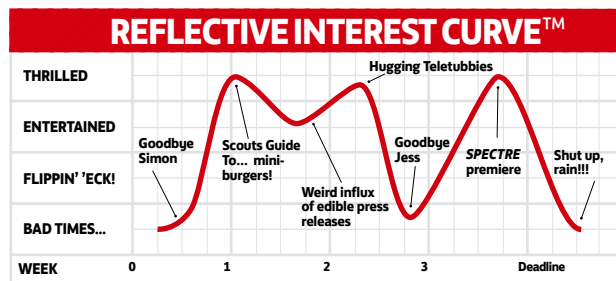


MG OMG OMG!! This issue we talked all things *Star Wars* with the team responsible for not doing a *Crystal Skull* on our favourite space opera with *The Force Awakens*. When we'd come back down to earth we also managed to chat to Angelina Jolie, Daniel Radcliffe, Quentin Tarantino, Johnny Depp, Benedict Cumberbatch and Snake Plissken himself, Kurt Russell. Plus we've sweated out the best A-list workouts and peered into the heart of darkness on *The Revenant*. And if all of that wasn't enough, we've also thrown in four collectible *Star Wars* Topps art cards that should have you recalling trips to the newsagent to buy them with a 10p Fudge bar. Or a Wham bar. Or those weird chocolate cigarettes... Ah, nostalgia. Enjoy the issue.

Jane
 JANE CROWTHER
 EDITOR

Drop us a line:
totalfilm@futurenet.com

The ups and downs of making this issue...



The editor's tactics for dealing with late articles have become more severe.

STAR LETTER

★ Planning a 'to-do list' for my wife and I's pending trip to New York, I asked her to come up with some sights she might like to see. Being a movie-loving couple and considering it's the Big Apple, I thought she'd be spoilt for choice. What has she come up with? "That 'Christmas tree thing' from *Home Alone 2* and the 'Ghostbusters firehouse!'" You gotta love her! Any ideas?

ALEX HOLLINGSWORTH, GRIMSBY



For scorning your good lady wife's suggestions – *IN PRINT*, no less – we're going to insist you recreate Michael Keaton's Times Square underpants jog from *Birdman*, for starters.

Followed by a bit of car-bonnet dancing a la *Fame*. By which point you'll have likely emptied the place Vanilla Sky-style. Oh, and when your arresting officer asks, a rival publication put you up to it, not us. Alex and everyone with a letter printed here will receive a copy of *Inside Out*, released 23 November on 3D Blu-ray, Blu-ray, DVD and digital via Disney-Pixar. Didn't send a postal address? Email it! Or there'll be no Joy, only Sadness!



Doc and roll

➤ At 30 years old, *Back To The Future* is as fresh as ever. It's the perfect film. I think a lot of people will agree. The acting, writing and direction are all faultless. However, one element that perhaps doesn't get enough credit is the music. 'The Power Of Love' and 'Johnny B. Goode' are now synonymous with the film. What other songs do your readers find inextricable from certain films?

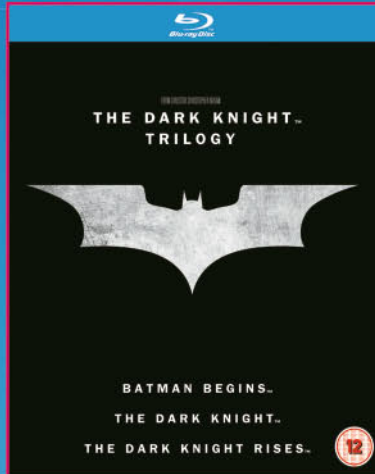
KEVIN, RUSKINGTON

Excellent question, Kevin. Readers: start scanning your mental jukeboxes, and be warned that 'I Like To Move It' may conjure images of maniacal gyrating lemurs. For our money, Louise Redknapp's (nee Nurdling) cover of 'Stuck In The Middle With You' from *Reservoir Dogs* always makes us want to slash our ears off.

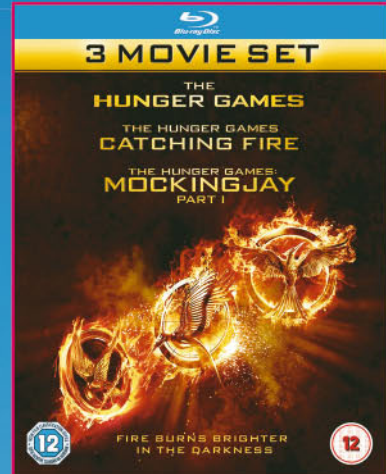
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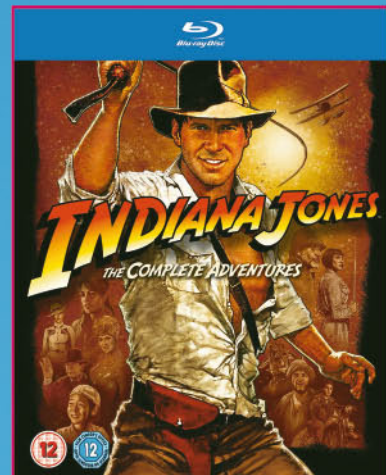
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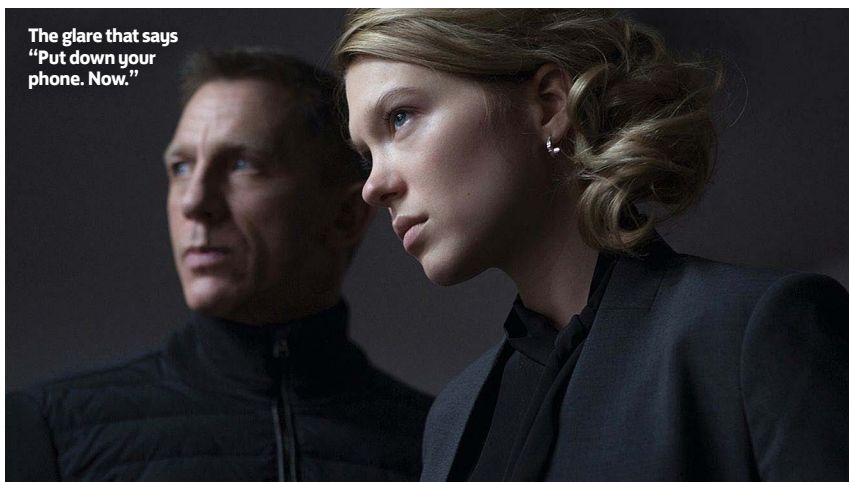
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The glare that says "Put down your phone. Now."

Mendes and motors

After all the hype, *SPECTRE* felt a little like a 'jolly boys outing' for Messrs Mendes and Craig. If this is Craig's swansong then I believe he (and Mendes) have left the series in a very strong position – but it didn't have the urgency or necessary danger of previous 007 outings, especially *Skyfall*. The Bond/Hinx car chase around the Vatican was quite sedate; it felt like Bond was taking the new Aston Martin for a test drive. I also felt Christoph Waltz gave us a watered-down version of his *Inglourious Basterds* villain. There were some very exciting moments – the pre-credits sequence, the Alps chase, the train fight – the female characters weren't just set dressing and it was good to see more screen time for Moneypenny, Q and M. But overall it left me a little shaken and certainly not stirred. **DAVE SKILLERN**, MID GLAMORGAN Awful! From the trailers/clips I could tell *SPECTRE* was going to be bad and poorly written, and I was proven right. I should've known when the interviews went on about how the set-pieces were bigger than *Skyfall*... Translation: they gave up on writing proper dialogue and forgot about a story. There

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'SPECTRE left me a little shaken and certainly not stirred'

wasn't one! Daniel Craig was meant to be a new, grittier James Bond, so why are we running to the past?

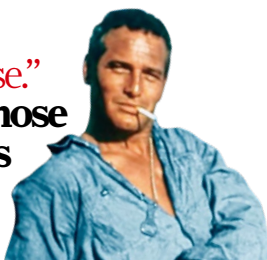
SADIA, VIA EMAIL

After visiting my local cinema to see *SPECTRE* I was left feeling annoyed. Not by the film which was gloriously entertaining, but the people who attended the same screening. My enjoyment was somewhat dampened by people continuously talking, checking their phones... we even had to listen to someone's ringtone. Can we not introduce some sort of vetting process for these big franchise films to keep out those who go and ruin average cinema-goer's enjoyment? **MATT**, DERBY *Maybe the pests could be shamed by an update of that old pre-film warning with the handbag-snatching snake: "Beware... Thieves are silent... and if those lowlives can keep their gobs shut, so can you!" As for SPECTRE's 'sedate' chase, they were clearly being respectful of a certain local resident needing some shut-eye after a hard day's Pope-ing. Some people still have manners!*

OFFICE SPACED

Chatter 'gems' overheard in the Total Film office this month...

► "Didn't realise you were on the phone, mate – I did a big *Krampus* noise." ► "Jessica Chastain... she's one of those people you fall in love with, soon as she talks." ► "I'm gonna eat 50 eggs, like Paul Newman. Fried, not boiled."



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They illuminate lives, put a human face on history and usually have a shot at Best Picture. Here's 30 of the very best biopics, featuring kings, geniuses and a filmmaker with a thing for angora.

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BOOZE 'N' BLU-RAY BOX OF THE MONTH

<https://twitter.com/totalfilm/status/661164068842131456>

To mark top-drawer oater *Slow West*'s arrival on home-ent, we were gifted a bottle of Sebor Absinth and, um, lots of straw. One whiff of the box and we were under the desk.



WASP CUPCAKES OF THE MONTH

<https://twitter.com/totalfilm/status/658656989870968833>

Working out which parts were edible and which weren't was half the novelty of these treats, for the release of enormo-insect horror *Stung*.



EDIBLE PAINTING OF THE MONTH

<https://twitter.com/totalfilm/status/657190685355962368>

Not sure what William Blake would make of his masterpiece *The Great Red Dragon And The Woman Clothed In Sun* being turned into a Blu-ray-promoting snack, but it made a change from going to Pret.

TV REVIEWS GAMESRADAR.COM/TV



Having trouble deciding which series to binge on? Tune in to our sister mag *SFX*'s list of the 30 best shows of the year at <http://www.gamesradar.com/best-tv-shows-2015/>. And don't forget to check out news and reviews of all the latest SF/fantasy shows.



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Oscar fright

I love your insightful list of movies that failed to capture the attention of the Academy. [http://www.gamesradar.com/50-movies-you-won-t-believe-didnt-win-oscars/] Being an avid viewer of the Oscars I must admit I remember the nominations but often forget those that were snubbed. I agree with many on your list. The *Fight Club* and *Shawshank Redemption* screenplay snubs are distressing – did Academy members watch these movies with earplugs in? And *Stand By Me*, what a shock! If that film was made today, it would be an Oscar magnet. And ‘What’s This?’ from *The Nightmare Before Christmas* should have been a Best Song winner. I love that tune so much and we all know that Danny Elfman is a genius!

HANNAH, VIA EMAIL
Talking of ‘What’s This?’, that’s exactly what we screamed to the heavens – well, a more post-watershed variation, to be honest – when The LEGO Movie was completely overlooked in last year’s Best Animated Feature race. Seriously, do you know how much hair-tearing, booklet-deciphering, down-the-back-of-the-sofa-searching agony went into making the fiddly thing? All David Lean ever had to do was shout “Go!” at some actors. One last chance, Academy: don’t even think about letting the Doof Warrior go home empty-handed.



Stupidly funny

I just got out of a showing of the Adam Sandler flop *Pixels* and I can’t say I agree with your two-star review. It’s a really fun film. Are we not expecting too much of our movies these days? Sure, it was silly but sometimes that’s what makes for the most enjoyment. Maybe it’s time we stopped wanting everything to be clever and started appreciating the dumber things in life.

JAMIE, VIA EMAIL

It’s true, there are times when you want something that goes easy on the grey matter (preferably not involving Kevin James as the President, mind). Let’s see lite versions of intellectual films: Bridge Of Pies, Steve Yobs, The Theory Of Nuffink.

Remake it happen

Is there any further news on the planned remakes of *The Dam Busters*, *When Worlds Collide* and *The Black Hole*? **JAMES FISHER, VIA EMAIL**
Unfortunately James, it’s TBC all round at the moment. Now that Peter Jackson’s finally done embiggening The Hobbit (and then embiggening it some more – see p132), maybe Dam Busters will be next (with a Bouncing Bombur?). When Worlds Collide has mooted since at least 2005, so doomsday may well have passed by the time that one lands in cinemas. As for The Black Hole, there was coincidentally a film with that very title produced this year, about a space-time calamity involving a violinist (an expert in string theory?). Let it sound like the next best thing to a remake, please note that the advice from one IMDb user is to “burn your money instead”.

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The next issue of TOTAL FILM on sale 18 December



TOTAL FILM

What's the name of your Star Wars character? Tell us yours at @totalfilm #tftstarname!

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EDITED BY MATT MAYTUM

FIRST LOOK!

Team mean

SUICIDE SQUAD | DC's going dark...

➤ “Who’s got the best bad guys out there?” director David Ayer asked recently. His answer: “DC Comics.” The *Fury* helmer is slightly biased, of course, having just shot *Suicide Squad*, which teams DC’s meanest anti-heroes for what promises to be the craziest comic-book adap yet.

The third film in DC’s expanded universe after *Man Of Steel* and *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice*, it sees government official Amanda Walker (Viola Davis) recruiting jailed super-criminals to form a deadly squad of assassins. Led by marksman Deadshot (Will Smith), they’re deployed to carry out missions too dangerous for

mere mortals, and members include ex-shrink Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie), assassin Boomerang (Jai Courtney), military officer Rick Flagg (Joel Kinnaman) and the reptilian Killer Croc (Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje).

And then there’s The Joker, played by Jared Leto, who had fun scaring his co-stars in typical Joker fashion during filming – he mailed them dead rats and had a whole dead hog delivered to the crew. It’s hard to imagine Ryan Gosling, who was originally up for the role, taking it to quite the same extremes. “It’s fucking insane,” enthuses Cara Delevingne (who plays the witch-y Enchantress) of the film, and going by what we’ve already seen – including a dark, gritty trailer – she’s not exaggerating.

“I’m all about real drama, real performance, and real people, so my twist on this is I’m creating a family,” Ayer says of tackling the crowded

superhero market. “I’m creating a brotherhood here.” He’s no stranger to action, either, having made intense war flick *Fury* and police drama *End Of Watch*. “I believe in old school filmmaking,” he tweeted during shooting in May 2015. “Real stunts. Real people. Real places.”

With Batman (Ben Affleck) reportedly making a cameo (a man in a Bat-suit was spotted during filming in Toronto), and Ayer even apparently hiring an on-set psychiatrist to ensure his stars weren’t left disturbed by the dark subject matter, *Suicide Squad* promises to give the superhero movie genre an invigorating shot of crazy. “The movie is going to be the best thing in the world,” says Delevingne. Adds Ayer: “The real shock is how hilarious it’s going to be.” **JW**

ETA | 5 AUGUST 2016 *Suicide Squad* opens next summer.

'It's f*ing insane;
this movie is going
to be the best thing
in the world'**

CARA DELEVINGNE

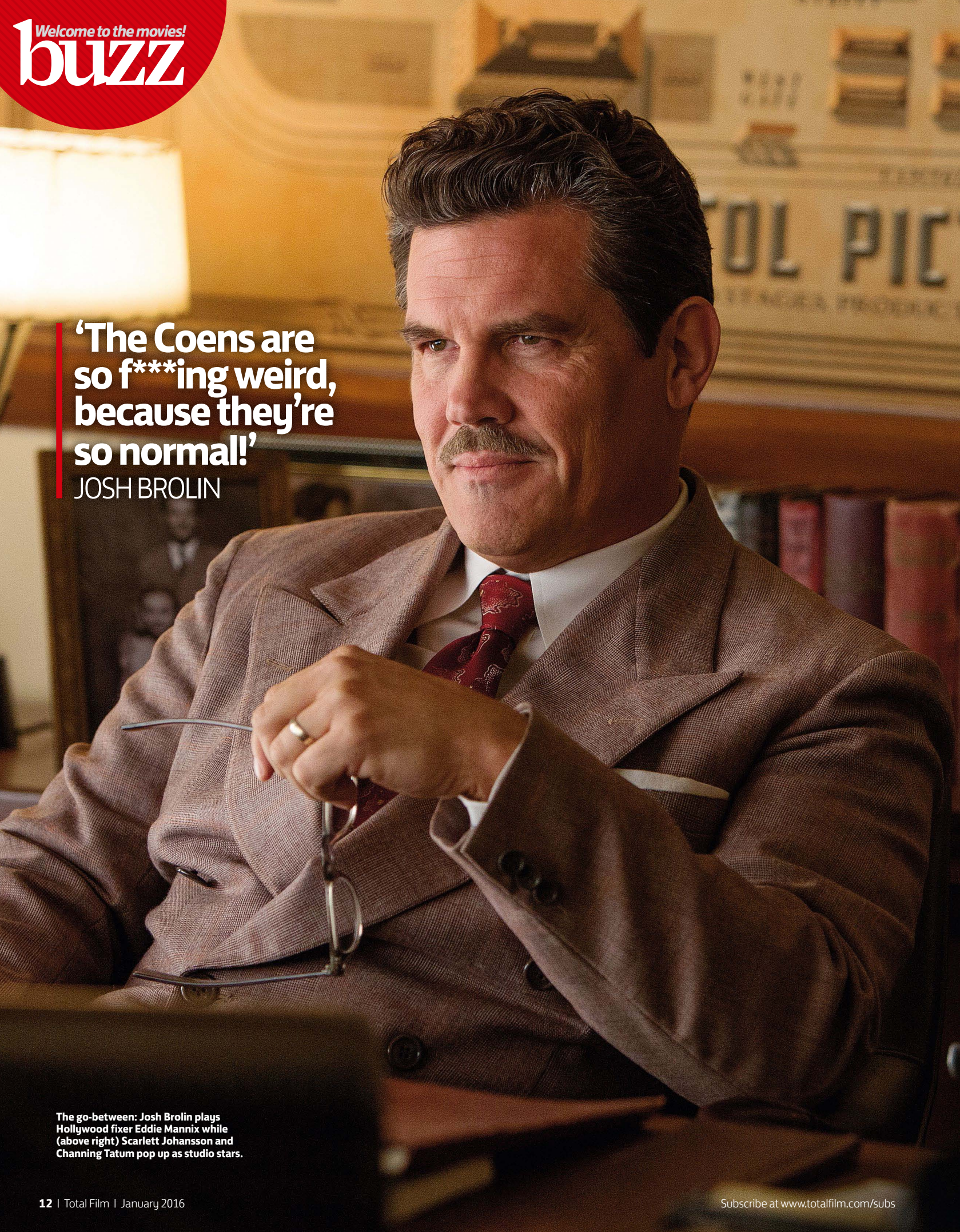


Bat-girl: Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie) and Killer Croc (Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje) get mean and (below) Harley counsels The Joker (Jared Leto).



**'The Coens are
so f***ing weird,
because they're
so normal!'**

JOSH BROLIN



The go-between: Josh Brolin plays Hollywood fixer Eddie Mannix while (above right) Scarlett Johansson and Channing Tatum pop up as studio stars.



FIRST WORD!

In a fix

HAIL, CAESAR! | Josh Brolin and George Clooney head to Hollywood for the Coens' new comedy...

➤ If the Coens have a sock drawer, *Hail, Caesar!* has been hidden at the back of it for well over a decade.

As far back as 2002, George Clooney was talking about this long-gestating comedy as the completion of his "trilogy of idiots", following his "knucklehead" characters in the Coens' *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and *Intolerable Cruelty*. While Clooney reunited with Joel and Ethan for 2008's *Burn After Reading*, the brothers have finally got around to bringing *Hail, Caesar!* to the big screen.

Set in the 1950s, right in the heart of Hollywood's Golden Age, Clooney plays Baird Whitlock, a less-than-bright actor who gets kidnapped during the making of the eponymous Roman epic. Out to rescue him is Josh Brolin's moustachioed Eddie Mannix, partly based on the Hollywood fixer of the same name who spent his days, says Brolin, "covering up the debauched acts of all the adolescent actors and pacifying the gossip writers of the time."

Head of Capitol Pictures, Brolin's character is a "hybrid" between the real Mannix and old-school studio moguls like Irving Thalberg and Louis B. Mayer. "I'm the through-line," he explains, modestly. "Everybody else is amazing." Others include Ralph Fiennes as director Laurence Lorenz, Scarlett Johansson and Channing Tatum as two studio stars and Tilda Swinton as columnist Hedda Hopper (another real-life figure, also played, coincidentally, by Helen Mirren in the upcoming *Trumbo*).

Like a number of the cast, it's not Brolin's first Coen rodeo, following Oscar-winner *No Country For Old Men* and remake *True Grit*. "They're my friends now," remarks Brolin, laughing. "They're so fucking weird – because they're so normal! It's the most uneventful experience [making a Coens film], because it's so professional, so familial. We're family now. I remember Sean Penn talking about making Super 8 films with Rob Lowe and Emilio Estevez. That's how it feels." **JM**

ETA | 26 FEBRUARY 2016 *Hail, Caesar!* opens next year.

Listen Up, HOLLYWOOD

This month, **Thor: Ragnarok**. Buzz pitches four ideas for the Marvel-lous threequel.

THOR: RAG-AND-BONE MAN

Finding himself in Yorkshire when he's cast out of Asgard, Thor survives by trekking door to door with a bag slung over his shoulder. It pisses down every day, suggesting our hero no longer has any say over the weather. A note of hope concludes the film: Thor, his business up and running, upgrades to a horse and cart. Directed by Clio Barnard.



THOR: ANORAK

Tired of being a blue-eyed superhero, the god of thunder trawls New York's smut district, placing his cape discreetly over his lap whenever he occupies seedy backstreet cinemas (insert your own helmet gag here). Begins a tender relationship with a tart-with-a-heart (Julia Roberts or, if she passes, Elisabeth Shue). Filmed back-to-back with a sequel set in Amsterdam's red-light district.

THOR: FRAGGLE ROCK

Burnt out from saving the human race, Thor holidays at Fraggles Rock, hanging out with the Fraggles, Doozers and Gorgs, eating radishes, having a little song and a dance, etc. It's only as he leaves that he realises he's learned important lessons about prejudice, personal identity, social conflict and more.

THE RAGNAROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW

Caught out by car trouble, the newly engaged Thor and Jane Foster rock up at an isolated castle belonging to Loki from the planet Asg... sorry, Transsexual. Tom Hiddleston in lippy and fishnets? The Hulk and Iron Man swinging by to do the Time Warp? Anthony Hopkins' Odin leading the orgiastic fumble in the swimming pool? Sign us up. **JG**

ETA | 27 OCTOBER 2017 *Thor: Ragnarok* opens in two years.

EXCLUSIVE!

Bro ho ho

THE NIGHT BEFORE | Seth Rogen
spills on his festive bromance.

➤ “I really am a fan of Christmas movies!” booms Seth Rogen. “It’s a genre that I grew up loving. Shane Black’s one of my favourite writers, and I love how he weirdly always sets his movies around Christmas time. And I love how *Die Hard* was a Christmas movie. There’s something about it. It’s so cinematic.”

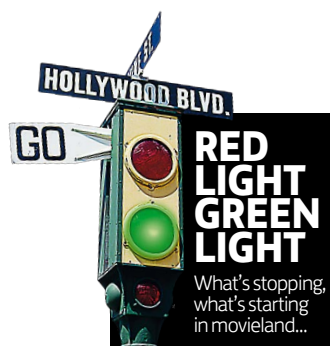
Rogen’s own foray into yule movies sees him reteam with *50/50* co-star Joseph Gordon-Levitt and director Jonathan Levine. Completing the central trio of best buds is part-time Avenger Anthony Mackie. The trio of dudes/bros/ride-or-die homies have been celebrating Christmas Eve together for 14 years, but as they’ve been getting older, their lifestyles have been pulling them apart – Rogen’s Isaac has a kid on the way, Chris’ (Mackie) career is going places. To mark their final 24 December together, they make it their mission to hit New York’s most bomb-ass party, taking in as many traditions (and illegal substances) as they can en route.

“We really tried to have our cake and eat it too, which is our goal at all times,” explains Rogen. “What we strive for is to kind of comment on a genre, and at the same time fully participate in that genre. So, it definitely subverts some of the notions of Christmas movies, but it also fully participates in a lot of notions of Christmas movies.”

So expect a dose of the warm and fuzzies alongside all of the bro banter and dick jokes. Rogen smiles. “It’s overall a really sweet story. We really tried to make it deliver on both those fronts: on it being an R-rated comedy that hopefully just destroys in a movie theatre, and a Christmas movie that might actually make you cry at one moment.” That sounds like something to be merry about. **MM**

ETA | 4 DECEMBER *The Night Before* opens next month.





John Wick 2 has found its villain, with *Smokin' Aces* star Common signing up to play the enforcer of a female mob boss. Expect him to make life very ugly for returning star Keanu Reeves.

The English-language *Raid* remake has suffered a sucker punch to the gut – both star Taylor Kitsch and director Patrick Hughes (*Expendables 3*) have ditched the film, which has been sitting in development since 2011.

Johnny Depp and Edgar Wright are joining forces to adapt Neil Gaiman's kids book *Fortunately, The Milk*, with Depp expected to play a dad-of-two who fights aliens, pirates and, uh, wumpires.

The live-action *Ghost In The Shell* remake is getting another script polish before it shoots in New Zealand next year – presumably to ensure star Scarlett Johansson has as many kick-ass one-liners as possible.



Mila Kunis, Christina Applegate and Kristen Bell will bring the funny in a new comedy from the writers of *The Hangover*. They'll play a trio of mothers on a bender. There'll be trouble in the morning... **JW**

PA, CORBIS



Film quotes pose as questions. Film stars try to cope. In the crosshairs this month:
James Purefoy

You talkin' to me?

I sincerely hope so. Unless you're Siri. You never know these days.

You can either surf, or you can fight.

Given a choice, I would surf. But if you want some, I'll give as good as I get.

Why so serious?

It's quite rare to see me serious off screen. I often play quite intense, serious people on screen. I like to think I approach most of life with a perpetual sensation of wryness.

What's in California?

I can say what's not in California – the four seasons. I have a theory that that's why they're so obsessed with youth, because the passing of time means nothing to them. In England, we get a real sense that that's another year gone, because we've gone through spring, summer, autumn, winter. They don't have that there. I don't think they ever really notice one year melding into the next.

If you could change something in your life, anything at all, what would it be?

Not inhaling the first Embassy No. 6. That was a mistake.

Do you like what you do for a living? These things you see?

Very much. I've seen polar bears hunting in the Arctic, I've seen tornadoes in the bayou, I've seen Sean Bean conducting cockroach races in a shitty hotel in the Crimea, and much more besides.



When you can live forever, what do you live for?

A pint of Butcombe ale as the sun goes down over the Somerset

I've played good guys as well, and some interesting people who aren't necessarily bad or good but are in a sort of grey area.

'I've seen tornadoes in the bayou, I've seen Sean Bean conducting cockroach races'

Levels. If I could live forever, that's a thing I would do every day.

Only two kinds of men get shot: criminals and victims. Which one are you?

I don't get shot. I do the shooting – or stabbing, to be more precise. The weird thing is, I read reviews saying "James Purefoy has made a career out of playing baddies", but it depends what you watch, really. I've played bad guys but

What would you do if you knew you had less than one minute to live?

Tell the truth. All of it. We play a game, don't we? All of us people who are in the public eye, we don't tell the truth. You don't say the bad things. I long to be able to say the bad things.

I like to be surprised...

I like to be surprised between "action" and "cut". Not any other time! I like it when you're doing a scene and you're in the moment. That's what defines you as an actor – can you deal with anything that's thrown at you? I like it when mistakes happen. **SD**

ETA 20 NOVEMBER *Momentum* opens this month.



Taking aim: Purefoy gives good gun as *Momentum*'s Mr. Washington.

**'I think
you know
immediately
if you have
chemistry'**

Between takes



Alison Brie on
chemistry, comedy
and superheroics.

How did you get involved in *Sleeping With Other People*?
Jason Sudeikis was already attached. I was a fan of [director] Leslye Headland from *Bachelorette*: that movie is very hilarious. When I got sent [this] script I was halfway in already. I met with Leslye the very next day, and later I had a chemistry read with Jason before getting the role.

Do you get a sense right away that the chemistry's working?
I think you know immediately if you have chemistry with the person or if you don't, or if you're working really hard to pretend like you do – which I'm not terrible at. But it was so easy with him.

It's a very frank film. Is that ever nerve-racking?
It was not nerve-racking at all. Leslye and I are very similar in that

we are so open and forthcoming. We're both very open and frank. And we don't have a filter.

We've had six *Community* seasons now – will we ever get the movie?
Gosh, I just don't know. Right after we wrapped the sixth season there was a lot of talk about maybe doing a movie. But then something happened, I think. There's been a lot less talk of it. I'm never going to count it out. I'm not going to, until the day I die; I will still consider it a possibility.

After working with the Russo brothers on *Community*, did you expect to see them go on to direct *Captain America* and *Avengers* movies?
I was more excited for Marvel that they have access to those guys. You know what I mean? I love Marvel movies. It made me happy

to go, "Oh good, Marvel movies are going to be even better."

Are we going to see Unikitty again in the next *LEGO Movie*?
I think so! Rob Schrab is directing it. He directed a lot of our *Community* episodes, and he was an executive producer on our final season. Actually, last time I saw Rob, he was like, 'What do you want Unikitty to do in the movie?' I totally don't remember what I said, so I'll be interested to see what she does! **MM**

Brie cool: with Jason Sudeikis in *Sleeping With Other People*.



TRAILER BREAKDOWN!

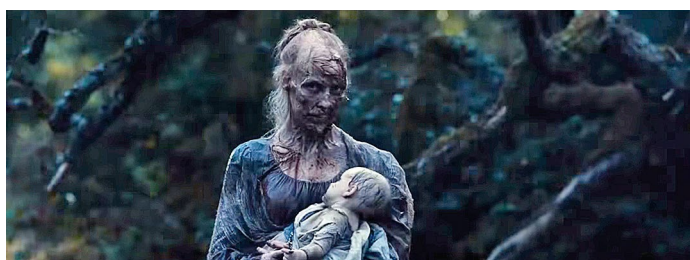
Grave matters

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES

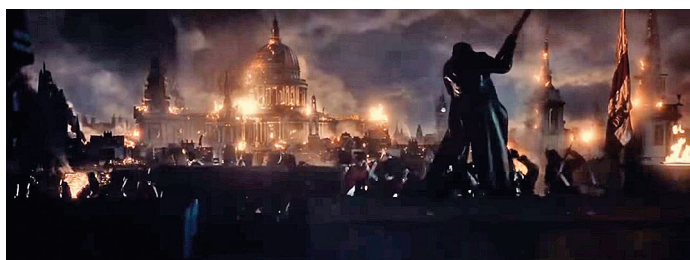
Buzz freeze-frames the highlights from the bonkers book adap...



1 Screams echo through the halls of a country estate (presumably Darcy's Pemberley), prompting a young woman to investigate. What does she find? Another young woman who looks a little bit not dead...



2 "It began with the black plague," intones our narrator. "Within weeks, the dead began to rise." Cue a chilling shot of an undead lady clutching a baby in the rain.



3 London's burning, London's burning... The full extent of the undead's devastation is revealed as St Paul's Cathedral goes up in flames. Meanwhile, soldiers battle to keep the zombie horde in check.



4 Oh, look, it's The Doctor! Matt Smith turns on the charm during dinner with Mr Bennet (Charles Dance), who's having none of it. "My daughters are trained for battle, sir," he growls.



5 He's not kidding. Armed with various pointy things, Elizabeth Bennet (Lily James) and her sisters do some damage – while dressed up in their glad rags. What would their mother say?



6 Mr Darcy (Sam Riley) has a close encounter with Elizabeth. But will he end up emerging from the lake in full-on hunk mode à la Colin Firth in the Beeb's adap?



7 In one of the trailer's most impressive moments, Mr Darcy lops the head off a zombie, with the grisly showdown innovatively shot from the zombie's POV by director Burr Steers. Heads will roll...



8 Lena Headey turns up in an eyepatch as Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Not seen in the trailer: her army of ninja assassins. You have to save some surprises, right? **JW**

ETA | 12 FEBRUARY 2016 *Pride And Prejudice And Zombies* opens next year.

FIRST LOOK!

Big prospects

GOLD | Matthew McConaughey goes thin-on-top for this modern-day treasure hunt.

➤ Double-take. It's the first thing you'll do upon seeing Matthew McConaughey and Bryce Dallas Howard in *Gold*.

Pot-bellied and balding, McConaughey appears to be following *Black Mass*' Johnny Depp in the radical transformation stakes, playing Kenny Wells, down-on-his-luck hustler and modern-day prospector who goes sifting for gold in an uncharted Indonesian jungle.

Fresh from her high-heeled sprints in mega-hit *Jurassic World*, Howard came on board to play Wells' long-time (and long-suffering) girlfriend, Kay, after Michelle Williams exited the project.

Swapping her usual red locks for a frizzy blonde perm, she's almost as unrecognisable as the Oscar-winning McConaughey, who will also be joined on his jungle jaunt by *Carlos* star Édgar Ramírez as a luckless geologist.

Shot in New York, New Mexico and Thailand, think *Treasure Of The Sierra Madre* meets *American Hustle* and you're somewhere near this story, based around the 1993 Bre-X Mineral Corporation Scandal, when the Canadian firm lured investors towards a supposed enormous gold deposit find in Indonesia that later proved false.

While the script passed across the desks of both Michael Mann and Spike Lee at various points, it's now being helmed by Stephen Gaghan, a director who has been so absent

from our screens, he was missing presumed lost. The Oscar-winning screenwriter of *Traffic*, he also steered George Clooney to a golden statue for oil industry drama *Syriana* – his last feature film, now a decade old.

Since then, Gaghan has directed two little-seen TV movies and penned the script for videogame *Call Of Duty: Ghosts* but done little else. *Gold* seems a much shinier, ahem, prospect. At the Berlin Film Festival earlier this year, it sparked a bidding war – with The Weinstein Company snagging the US rights for a cool \$15m. No word yet on whether Spandau Ballet are doing the theme tune, though. **JM**

ETA | 2016 *Gold* is expected to open next year.

Streets ahead: Bettany directs *Ultron*-co star Anthony Mackie.

ON SET!

Bettany's Vision

SHELTER | The Brit Avenger turns movie director...

➤ From *Iron Man*'s Jarvis to Vision in *Avengers: Age of Ultron*, Paul Bettany has hit Marvel pay-dirt. With *Captain America: Civil War* in the can it's now time for his directorial debut, *Shelter*, starring wife Jennifer Connelly and Anthony Mackie as two New York down-and-outs.

MONEY-SPINNER

"I got really lucky. I got involved in the largest franchise ever [Iron Man and The Avengers] and it gives you a security that I never had as an actor. That gives you the ability to say 'no' to anything you don't want to do and develop things. It's been brilliant for me. I've been able to start writing, directing."

GIMME SHELTER

"It weirdly felt really natural, directing Jennifer. She's an extraordinary storyteller. And Anthony is too. And in large parts, I really wanted to shoot the story they wanted to tell, give them freedom. So many times now, you come down to set and your marks are on the ground, already being figured out."

HOLLYWOOD HELP

"People like Darren Aronofsky and David Koepp and Ron Howard and William Monahan and Johnny Depp – all these people that I know or I've worked with – came in and gave notes on *Shelter*. Aside from the actors, they were my second biggest resource. Getting notes on early cuts was brilliant – a huge advantage."

BETTANY ASSEMBLE

"It's been brilliant, working with Marvel. You're working with people at the top of their game: Downey and Ruffalo, all of them. Moreover, the people that make the films are artists and they're also fans. I think the reason why the Marvel success is as great as it is – they're made by fans."

CIVIL RIGHTS

"It was great on *Civil War*. They're a lovely bunch of guys and girls, and they're really happy – as well they should be. They're all being paid very well to be there and you're in this enormous runaway train success. I probably can't [talk about Vision's role]... I'd love to keep my job!" **JM**

ETA | DECEMBER *Shelter* opens next month.

THE SHORT LIST

The best movie ghosts...

1 RINGU (1998)



Think cursed video tapes sound daft?

Not when you've seen the one in *Ringu*, which shows long-haired Sadako creeping out of a well like a giant spider in order to escort you to your doom. We're still not over the TV moment, and don't even get us started on the eye...

a recently deceased couple to remove the living from their home. Brilliantly barmy, he's one of the coolest ghosts about. And he knows it.

4 GHOSTBUSTERS (1984)



Literally busting with floaty apparitions. If it's not Slimer wreaking havoc, it's demented old ladies and Zuul, a demonic spirit who's taken up residence in poor old Sigourney Weaver's fridge...

2 A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (1984)



Dream stalker Freddy

Krueger (Robert Englund) is all kinds of nasty. His modus operandus involves taunting (hell, tearing at) nubile teens – but nobody will believe them because it's all "just a dream". Devilishly clever.

5 THE GRUDGE (2002)



Following on from *Ringu*,

The Grudge features another scorned woman full of rage. More contortionism and ghostly pale faces, and we've not even started on those throat-clearing phone calls... **JW**

3 BEETLEJUICE (1988)



He's creepy and he's spooky,

he's just a little ooky... Beetlejuice is a bio-exorcist hired by

For more movie ghosts, go to www.gamesradar.com/best-worst-movie-ghosts/

HINDSIGHT CORNER!

Stars eat their words...



SIENNA MILLER

G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra (2009)

August 2009 "I just wanted to do something that was pure entertainment... The script was brilliant, the role was brilliant."

October 2015 "For me, it wasn't a great experience... I'm the least threatening person. They cast me without meeting me."

PA IMAGES

STUDIO VISIT!

Hats off

SNOOPY AND CHARLIE BROWN: THE PEANUTS MOVIE | We go Snoopy-ing around Blue Sky Studios in search of animation secrets...

➤ *The Peanuts Movie* will bring Snoopy, Charlie Brown and pals to a whole new generation of kids. But with the gang's antics traditionally rendered in 2D, will something be lost in translation when they make the leap to 3D film?

We took a trip to Blue Sky Studios to ask director Steve Martino and his crew of *Peanuts* fanatics about the animation tricks they used to turn Snoopy's 2D comic-strip into a faithfully rendered 3D movie...



BLUE SKY THINKING

"The good thing is, I had the team at Blue Sky with me," says Martino. "The day we announced we were doing this, people lined up saying 'I need to work on this movie, you don't understand!' And they shared their Snoopy experience. There were around 400 people working on *Peanuts* at Blue Sky. I consider them to be very talented gifted artists, very passionate creators of animation, effects, and all the various things they do on the film, but more importantly, they were 400 fans who joined me in taking on this responsibility of not screwing it up."



CUBIST INFLUENCE

"What's interesting about Snoopy is he's a Picasso," Senior Animator Nick Bruno says. "If you're looking at a real dog's profile, they've got the long head and snout. If the dog turns, it no longer has that big silhouette. But Schulz always drew Snoopy with the same silhouette. If he's looking at you, the eyes and nose are on the front of that silhouette; if he's looking to the side, it's just one eye and the nose. Snoopy technically never moves his head. So what we did was put all the face parts on one side of the head, like a Picasso."



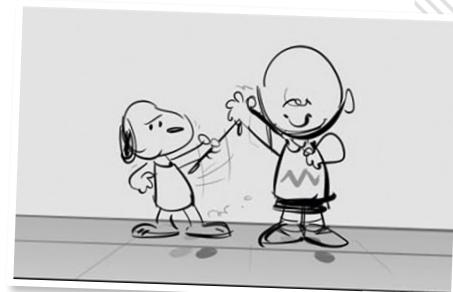
MEET FIFI

Martino's *Peanuts* introduces a new character. "Fifi is a character that was mentioned several times in the comic strip, and as we were developing the script, she became a character who would be important in Snoopy's fantasy adventures. When we were designing her, we went back and did an exhaustive study of how Charles Schulz drew Snoopy and Snoopy's siblings, how he handled characters like that, and worked with Paige Braddock – who worked side-by-side with Charles Schulz – to develop Fifi, who looks and feels like she's in Schulz's design vocabulary."

ANIMATION SPECIAL!

DEPTH PERCEPTION

Peanuts' 3D journey, from hand-drawn to hi-res.



FROM PENCIL SKETCHES...

"When we storyboard we do a lot digitally, we work on tablets," says director Martino. "We're very used to drawing with 'undo' commands. Here, we used pencil and paper, with markers and ink, and felt the challenge of 'no undo.'"



TO 3D MODELS...

"We tried to get the suggestion of a penline in the model, wherever we could, even in the snow in the background, in the grass tufts," admits art director Nash Dunnigan. "It all should connect back to the strip."



TO ICONIC LOCATIONS...

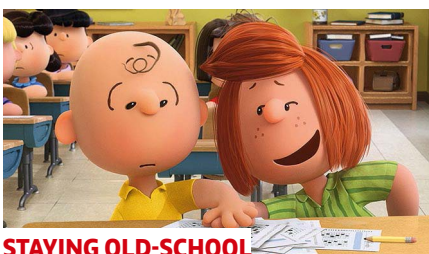
"We looked directly to the strips, and looked to Charles Schulz as our production designer. We have many landmark locations, like Lucy's psychiatric booth," adds Dunnigan.

ETA | 21 DECEMBER *Snoopy And Charlie Brown: The Peanuts Movie* opens next month.



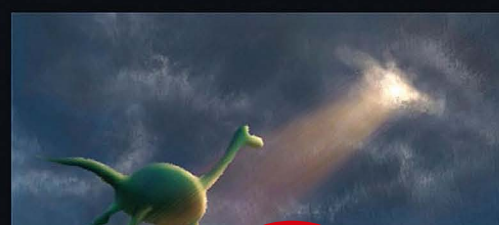
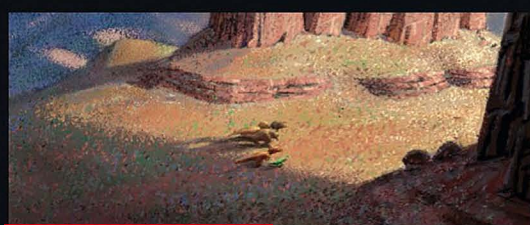
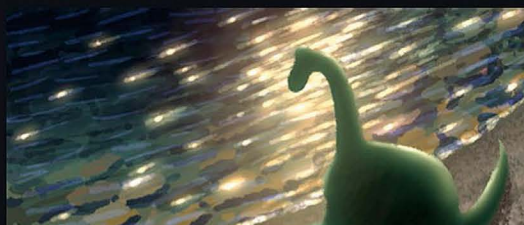
LOVING SNOOPY

The strip's legacy was important to director Steve Martino. "Everybody has a *Peanuts* memory," he tells *Buzz*. "What I've learned over the past three years of making this film is that it's touched people's lives in so many ways. Whenever I told my family, or neighbours or friends that we were making the movie, I always got the same reaction: 'I'm so excited!' And then: 'Don't screw it up.' So in the early days, my feeling was 'Oh good grief, this is a big responsibility. We're handling the precious memories of people around the world who love *Peanuts*.' I felt the weight of that."



STAYING OLD-SCHOOL

The most important element for Martino was ensuring his team stayed true to the look and feel of the original strip. "Our paintbrush is computer animation and there are some things that are really beneficial, in terms of emotional storytelling, using the tools that we have. But what became the priority to me was finding the pen-line. We're not hand-drawing these images, but I wanted to make them feel hand-drawn. Finding that pen-line in everything, in the environments, the way we approach the character designs, everything. That became the anchor for me." **SA**



STUDIO VISIT!

**ANIMATION
SPECIAL!**

Roar material

THE GOOD DINOSAUR | As Pixar readies its biggest, most spectacular animation yet, Buzz visits the San Francisco studio to see pre-history in the making.

► BIG IS BEAUTIFUL

It's a dinosaur story set today. It's a western without cowboys. It's a road movie about a boy and his dog. There's a lot going on in Pixar's latest animation, but the first thing you'll notice is the background – designed with “painterly realism” to make every frame look like the sort of thing you'd happily hang on your wall. “We wanted the world to be one of the characters,” says director Peter Sohn. “It's beautiful and it's dangerous at the same time. We talked about Terrence Malick a lot. We also looked at the landscapes of John Ford, David Lean and George Stevens... Carroll Ballard's *The Black Stallion* and Michael Cimino's *Heaven's Gate* were huge inspirations too.” In other words, it's *big*.



► **HAIR OF THE DOG**

In an alt-world where an asteroid didn't wipe out the dinosaurs, humans haven't evolved much beyond pets. "The boy and his dog story is an archetype that I love," says Sohn, who modelled human sidekick Spot's look on his daughter's bed-head. "There's not a lot of dialogue in the film anyway, but with Spot, it's all in his eyes."

▼ **SECOND NATURE**

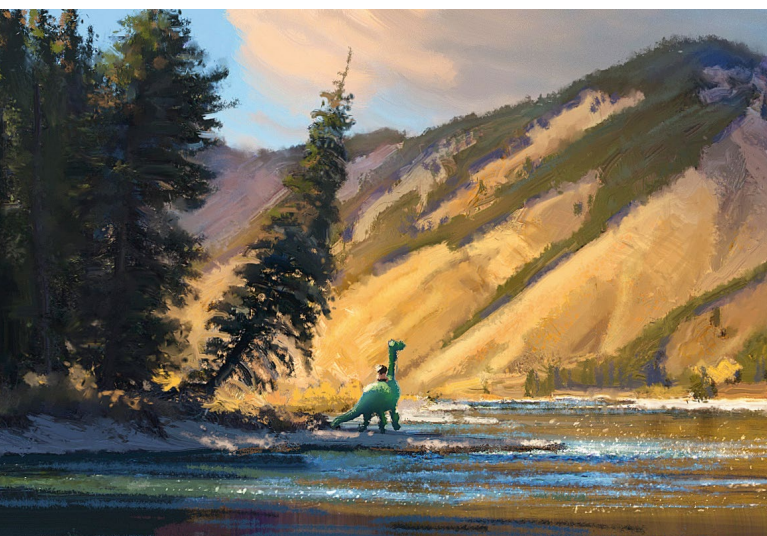
Swept away from his family, Arlo the Apatosaurus spends the film learning to adjust to his surroundings. "This is really the first Pixar movie where the main character is a child," says Sohn, "so we wanted the world to look like we were seeing it for the first time. In every scene we have 'haiku shots'—raindrops hitting leaves, ripples in water, wind through trees."

▲ **TOOTH AND CLAW**

Here herbivores are farmers and carnivores are ranchers—"galloping" like John Wayne, toasting squirrels around the campfire and talking in the dulcet tones of Sam Elliott. Elsewhere, there's redneck raptors, whack-a-mole gophers, and one tripped-out Triceratops who talks to all the pet canaries he collects on his horns.

▼ **KID STUFF**

Arlo (voiced by 14-year-old Raymond Ochoa) presented a challenge for filmmakers, who walked elephants around the local zoo to study their weight and locomotion. "There's the *Jurassic Park*-style dinosaur, but that's really just a cow," says Sohn. "I wanted Arlo to be a boy, so his knees are a little knobbier, and his eyes are a bit bigger to bring naivety."

◀ **THE BIG COUNTRY**

Needing vistas big enough to make dinosaurs feel small, the filmmakers decided to throw out the rulebook. "We didn't want backgrounds," says sets supervisor David Munier. "We wanted a living world... So we downloaded the US Geological Survey data and we started matching it to Ansel Adams photographs of the Grand Teton National Park, eventually building over 35,000 square kilometres of virtual landscape."

▲ **LEADING THE HERD**

There's a fine line between *The Land Before Time* and *The Flintstones*—and *The Good Dinosaur* avoids it completely. "There were versions of this movie that had the dinosaurs using kitchen gadgets," laughs Sohn. "And there were also versions where the T. rexes practically had spurs and Stetsons. That's fun at first, but then we realised, everyone does that. We're better than that. This is Pixar..." PB

ETA | 27 NOVEMBER *The Good Dinosaur* opens this month.

FIRST LOOK!

Island life

MOANA | Disney goes native for this South Pacific voyage of discovery.

➤ Meet Disney's latest heroine. Moana (pronounce that 'M-wana') is the teenager at the (big) heart of the Mouse House's new adventure, a vibrant 16-year-old girl from the ancient past who sets out on the waters of Oceania to complete her ancestors' unfulfilled quest.

Voicing Disney's first-ever Polynesian Princess is the equally spirited 14-year-old Auli'i Cravalho, who beat hundreds of young hopefuls to the role. Mindful, perhaps, of the storm of controversy caused by the casting of Rooney Mara in the role of *Pan's* Tiger Lily, directors Ron Clements and John Musker smartly selected the Hawaiian newcomer.

"When I first heard that there was an audition to potentially play Moana, I thought, 'No way that can be me,'" comments Cravalho. How wrong she was. The last girl seen by casting director Rachel Sutton on her very last day of auditions, Cravalho was made to wait for weeks before meeting the directors, who couldn't help but note her "fearlessness".

"She has a playful, mischievous wit," says Musker, whose other credits with co-writer/director Clements include *The Princess And The Frog* and *Aladdin*. "She [is able to] project vulnerability, and her Polynesian background has helped shape her connection to family, hard work and music. These are all qualities she shares with Moana."

Alongside Cravalho is Dwayne Johnson, voicing the once-mighty demi-god Maui who joins Moana on her adventure. Expect them to face all manner of fiery creatures in a story – co-scripted with *What We Do In The Shadows'* New Zealand-born Taika Waititi – that promises to delve into real-life mythology.

Set to be Musker and Clements' first computer-animated film, Disney traditionalists need not fear. *Moana* will be packed with music, with Tony-winner Lin-Manuel Miranda, Grammy-winning composer Mark Mancina (*The Lion King*) and Te Vaka lead singer Opetia Foa'i collaborating. The bad news? You'll still have to wait a year before you can say 'Aloha' to this. **JM**

ETA | 2 DECEMBER 2016 *Moana* opens next year.

NEW FILMS!

**ANIMATION
SPECIAL!**





FIRST LOOK!

Man trouble

DADDY'S HOME | It's Ferrell versus Wahlberg...

➤ “If this guy was my wife’s ex, I’d put a bullet in my skull,” deadpans Thomas Haden Church in *Daddy’s Home*, the new comedy from *Horrible Bosses 2* director Sean Anders. He’s referring to Dusty (Mark Wahlberg), the muscular bad boy who has reserved radio exec Brad (Will Ferrell) twisting himself into all kinds of knots.

As husband to Sarah (Linda Cardellini) and stepdad to Dusty’s kids, Brad finds himself

fighting for the ankle-biters’ affections when Dusty drops by for a visit. It doesn’t help that Dusty has the bod of a prize fighter and the attitude to match. “Looks like we’ve got ourselves a good old-fashioned dad-off,” he says while demonstrating his obvious superiority by doing shirtless pull-ups without breaking a sweat.

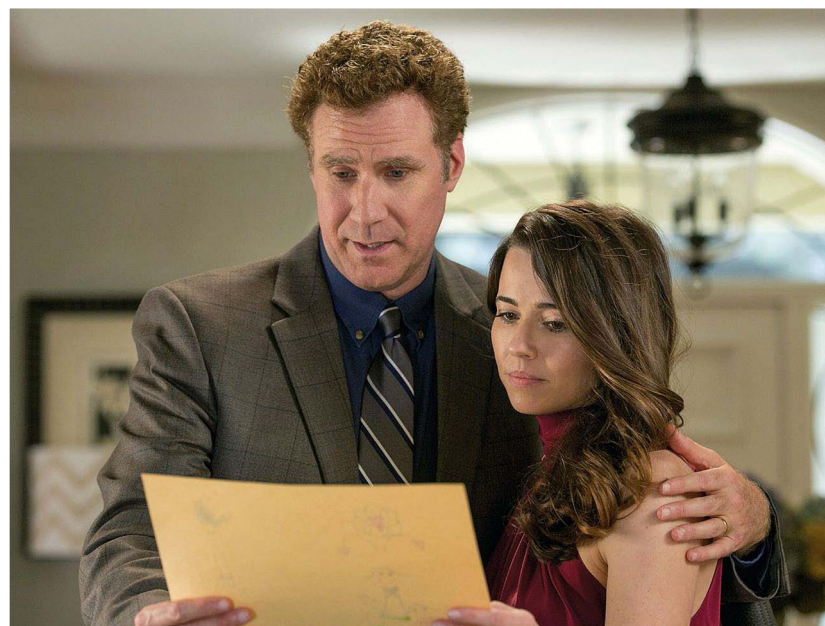
It’s been five years since Wahlberg and Ferrell first teamed up on *The Other Guys*, and where that film revealed Wahlberg to be a surprisingly adept comedian (“Will had to keep up with me,” he joked in 2010, “all the curve balls I was throwing at him”), *Daddy’s Home* comes after two *Ted* flicks and a cameo in the *Entourage* movie. With Wahlberg now splitting his time between big-budget actioners

(*Transformers: Age Of Extinction*) and a host of unapologetic rib-ticklers, it’s about time he and Ferrell jumped back in the comedy ring.

“We all have that adolescent side to us,” he says. “I’m very serious with my work, but I like to cut loose with my buddies, pulling pranks on each other.” And there are plenty of pranks in *Daddy’s Home*, as Brad falls prey to Dusty’s conniving ways. There’s drunk basketball, celebrating Christmas in April, skateboarding mishaps, and Ferrell going for a ride on a Harley-Davidson (one which doesn’t end well). This is going to hurt... **JW**

ETA | 26 DECEMBER *Daddy’s Home* opens later this year.

**‘We all
have that
adolescent
side to us...’**
MARK WAHLBERG



Hold tight: Brad (Will Ferrell), Dusty (Mark Wahlberg) and Sarah (Linda Cardellini) bond amidst (left and above) obvious rivalry.



VIEWING GUIDE

For your eggs only

SPECTRE | Bond 24 is loaded with 007 legacy Easter eggs. Here are 33 of 'em to watch out for on your repeat viewing...



001 That classic gun-barrel opening – missing from all of Daniel Craig's previous outings – is finally back, nodding to all the previous Bonds.

002 The opening Day of the Dead festival in Mexico City recalls the Nassau Junkanoo parade featured in *Thunderball* (1965) and the equally colourful Rio carnival in *Moonraker* (1979).

003 The skeletal disguise Bond wears in Mexico pays tribute to Baron Samedi, the otherworldly voodoo lord in Mendes and Craig's favourite of the series, *Live And Let Die* (1973).

004 Bond toasts his target in Mexico with the words "Bottoms up!" – the name of the sleazy Hong Kong bar in *The Man With The Golden Gun* (1974).

005 The SPECTRE octopus logo ring pays its dues to the signet ring seen in *Thunderball*, the film at the centre of legal wrangles that have prevented Eon from using Blofeld in recent films.

006 No Bond film is truly complete without a cameo from co-producer Michael G. Wilson (he's appeared in 16 Bond films since *Goldfinger*). Spot him in the background during a scene with Andrew Scott's 'C'.

007 Bond hanging out in a white shirt and gun holster with dark tie, supping a drink during his meeting with Money Penny, recalls Sean Connery's relaxed style in his Jamaican hotel room in *Dr No* (1962).

008 Bond's bookshelf at home includes the work of Raymond Chandler. He buys a Chandler novel in Ian Fleming's *Goldfinger*.

009 M's porcelain bulldog from *Skyfall* (2012) can be glimpsed on the coffee table in Bond's apartment.

0010 Bond's Aston is intended for 009. An agent with the same number was murdered by knife-throwing twins Mischka and Grischka in *Octopussy* (1983).

0011 "I expected it back in one piece," Q tells 007 of the Aston Martin DB10, echoing Desmond Llewellyn's classic *Goldfinger* line, "Try to bring it back in one piece!"

0012 Q equips 007 with an explosive watch, also issued in *Moonraker*, *Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997) and *Die Another Day* (2002).

0013 Bond unzips Lucia Sciarra's (Monica Bellucci) dress in a shot that pays more than a little homage to Roger Moore cheekily disrobing Madeline Smith with his magnetic watch in *Live And Let Die*.

0014 Blofeld's face is initially obscured from us when we first see him in Rome, just like our first glimpse of him hidden behind slats in *From Russia With Love* (1963).

0015 Franz Oberhauser's backstory is lifted directly from Fleming's original *Octopussy* short story.

0016 Mr Hinx (Dave Bautista) has only one line of dialogue – he's cast from the mute, indestructible henchman mould of Jaws (*Moonraker* and *The Spy Who Loved Me*) and Oddjob (*Goldfinger*, 1964).

0017 The Aston Martin has an ejector seat, just like in *Goldfinger* – but now it's the driver's seat that's rigged.

0018 The alpine clinic where Bond meets Madeleine Swann (Léa Seydoux) references Switzerland's Piz Gloria, Blofeld's vertiginous hideaway in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969).

0019 The snowy chase down Austrian slopes and the plane crashing through the barn echoes the bike-ski-bobsleigh pursuit in *For Your Eyes Only* (1981).

0020 Craig rocks a white tuxedo with a scarlet carnation on the train in Morocco – the same combo seen on Sean Connery in *Goldfinger*.

0021 Bond's train scrap with Hinx homages locomotive-based smackdowns in *From Russia With Love*, *Live And Let Die* and *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977).

0022 Blofeld's base in a meteor crater recalls his spectacular volcanic lair in *You Only Live Twice* (1967).

0023 Bond placing his gun on a tray at Blofeld's lair evokes Scaramanga putting his titular weapon on Nick Nack's tray in *The Man With The Golden Gun*.

0024 Blofeld wears a collarless Nehru jacket, the classically sinister wardrobe choice of the character since *You Only Live Twice* (and also favoured by original baddie, Dr No).

0025 The cinematic Blofeld is iconically bald but Christoph Waltz plays him with silvery, side-parted hair that recalls Charles Gray's take on the character in *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971).

0026 Blofeld's beloved white Persian cat (previously seen in *From Russia With Love*, *You Only Live Twice*, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, *Diamonds Are Forever*, *For Your Eyes Only* and *Never Say Never Again*) is once again present and correct.

0027 When Bond first spots the feline he says, "Hello, Pussy," which is a cheeky wink to Pussy Galore in *Goldfinger*.

0028 The torture scene, including the dialogue, is inspired by a passage in Kingsley Amis' 1968 Bond novel *Colonel Sun*.

0029 MI6's Hildebrand Prints safehouse nods to Ian Fleming's *Playboy* short story *The Hildebrand Rarity* (where Bond goes in search of rare fish).

0030 Blofeld's facial scarring after Bond's explosive exit is a callback to Donald Pleasence's iconic make-up job in *You Only Live Twice*.

0031 The final scene of cat and mouse in the MI6 building is a reference to *The Man With The Golden Gun*'s funhouse finale.

0032 The speedboat chase on the Thames recalls the pre-titles of *The World Is Not Enough* (1999) – and the publicity stunt that unveiled Daniel Craig to the world's media in 2005.

0033 Bond and Madeleine exiting behind the wheel of a classic Aston Martin recalls Bond driving off with Tracy in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. JC / NSE

It Shouldn't Happen To A Film Journalist



Editor-at-Large Jamie Graham lifts the lid on movie journalism. This month: **when journalists lose their cool.**

➤ Last week I was sitting with Tom Hanks having a good ol' chinwag (well, he was – I was fighting to get a question in, such as his volume and verbosity) and thinking just how marvellous it was to be operating without strictures.

Normally, before interviewing a movie star, a flustered PR person reads out the riot act: no personal questions, no photographs or autographs, no slipping them your prized screenplay, etc. In this age of social media, 'image control' (read: attempts to control the press) have become more, well, controlling.

Not so with Tom Hanks, a fiercely intelligent man who's big enough (6ft, a combined US box-office of \$4,438,979,778 – the third highest in history) and commanding enough to take care of himself. The same, it should be said, applies to Tom Cruise – for all the crap that's written about him, he enters interviews without conditions, just abundant warmth and enthusiasm.

It's hard, of course, to know just how much comes from the stars themselves and how much is their agents, whose job, after all, is to look after their client. In Cannes, awaiting an interview with Angelina Jolie, I was warned *three times* not to ask anything about Brad and/or the children, only for Angie to plonk herself down and say, "Sorry I'm late, I was with Brad and Maddox..." and then proceed to gabble at length about her family before I could break in. Again in Cannes, at a press



'They broke rank to mob Spielberg like a rock star'

conference, the crowd of journos was ordered to sit down and be quiet as Gwyneth Paltrow prepared to enter the room. It was some entrance: "They're not children," she witheringly pointed out to the frowning fustpot. The silent cheer lifted the roof off the room.

But despite many journalists, myself among them, liking few things more than a good grouch about the condescension that is poured upon us, it should be pointed out that (grits teeth) it's kind of understandable. I can't sit here and honestly say that I've never, in my career, finished an

interview and not then fished out an item of movie memorabilia and a Sharpie. I've only done it a handful of times in 20 years, but I've done it, and my study is thus adorned by original posters of *The Godfather*, *Taxi Driver* and, er, *Firestarter*, signed to me by Francis Ford Coppola, 'Bob' De Niro and Drew Barrymore (who added a couple of big fat hearts for good measure).

Still, my once-in-a-blue-moon descents into fanboy-ism are nowt compared to the behaviour I once witnessed (again, weirdly, in Cannes) as journalists were arranged into

small groups around the edge of a room to meet and greet the good folk of *Indiana Jones And The Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull*. Ray Winstone, Jim Broadbent and Cate Blanchett were steered group to group to say awkward hellos, while Shia LaBeouf and Harrison Ford bypassed everyone to glower out on the balcony. Then entered Steven Spielberg. Boom – 80 per cent of the journos broke rank to mob him like a rock star, while those of us who maintained stations and professionalism had to settle for the odd glimpse of a baseball cap.

Gwyneth Paltrow, I feel, would have been horrified.

Jamie will return next issue... For more misadventures follow: @jamie_graham9 on Twitter.

FLASHBACK

This month:
Issue 112,
March 2006

Let's do the time warp as we look back at classic issues of Total Film...



COVER STORY

➤ This cover was dominated by Gorgeous George, as we proclaimed Clooney the most dangerous man in Hollywood for the deadly double whammy of *Syriana* and *Good Night, And Good Luck*. "I'm a fan of trying things that are going to polarise at times," he told us. "And I'm in a lucky position to push some

of those things through. It'll get us in trouble every once in a while, but I like that." Talking of polarising, our pull-out, 'The month movies got seriously sexy', seemed destined to split opinion, with a painstaking analysis of porn movie homages, and a look at the now-infamous *Basic Instinct 2*.



THE INSIDE SCOOP

➤ Elsewhere in the issue, we met up with maverick auteur Werner Herzog to chat *Grizzly Man*: "Nowhere in my films will you look so deep into the human condition." With *North Country* on the horizon, Charlize Theron was contemplating

post-Oscar career choices, and continuing the classy content (and balancing out the grubbiness of that 'Sexy' special) were features on cult-classics-in-the-making *Lady Vengeance* and *The Proposition*, while January Jones was being eyed as one to watch.

QUOTE ME ON THAT

“To an artist, describing love and happiness is nothing. It is much more attractive to describe the darker side. Describing love, rather than violence, is really quite boring...”

Park Chan-wook

TF INTERVIEW ROB REINER

The genre-hopping director on how the industry changed.

ON CASTING BIG STARS

➤ “Well, there was no place for stars in *Stand By Me* or *The Sure Thing* but movies have changed since I made those pictures. When I had my own company I was free to get the best people and not worry about box office.”

ON SPECIAL EFFECTS

“I have a problem with films that rely on effects – on sounds and images that strap you to the chair and jolt you. At the end of the day, you just go, ‘Well, what did I see here? What was that about?’ I like movies about people.”

ON HIS DAD, CARL REINER

“My father was a very big force. He was a big director of movies like *The Jerk*, *All Of Me* and *The Man With Two Brains*. People regarded him in the highest way, so that was a big shadow to come out from under.”

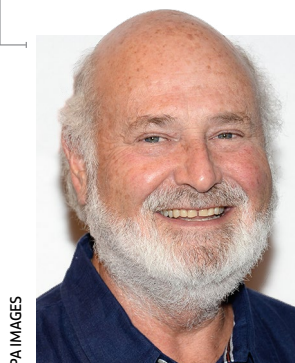
OLD NEWS

“This film is gonna be nuts,” Robert Downey Jr. said of *A Scanner Darkly*. “Richard Linklater is an insanely great director.” RDJ now rules the blockbuster world as Iron Man, and Linklater recently attracted awards aplenty for *Boyhood*.

Back in 2006, Bryan Singer was talking up his take on the Man of Steel in *Superman Returns*. “Clark Kent is definitely the disguise,” he said. Meanwhile, the film was the first to shoot on Panavision’s Genesis camera.

Hugh Jackman was just as busy a decade ago. The perennially in-demand actor was juggling *The Fountain*, Woody Allen’s *Scoop*, *Happy Feet*, *Flushed Away*, *The Prestige* and *X-Men: The Last Stand*. No surprise then that mooted FBI thriller *Fed X* ended up falling by the wayside...

Creed might be hitting cinemas next year, but back in 2006 Stallone was hard at work on *Rocky Balboa*. “Society says to people, ‘Step aside and age gracefully,’” said the then 59-year-old. “I’ve never thought there was anything graceful about ageing.”



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This month's trending topics...

agenda

Gugu-Mbatha Raw is superstar-ready...

You spend any time around Will Smith and you learn how to be a movie star," says Gugu Mbatha-Raw.

It's a good thing she's been taking note.

The 32-year-old Brit is currently best known for the title role in period-piece *Belle*, and she made an impact as a Rihanna-esque popstar in the criminally-underseen *Beyond The Lights*. Next up on her slate? She's reportedly in discussions for a key role in *Star Wars: Episode VIII*, but even if that particular rumour doesn't come to pass, she's got one hell of a line-up ahead.

Early next year sees the release of heavyweight sports drama *Concussion* (alongside Will Smith), which is one of two releases likely to be grabbing the attention of awards voters. The other? Gary Ross' civil war thriller *The Free State Of Jones* ("70 days shooting in swamps in a corset") opposite Matthew McConaughey.

And if that all sounds like it might get a bit heavy, she'll be demonstrating a lightness of touch as feather duster Plumette in Disney's big-budget live-action retelling of *Beauty And The Beast*. "Well, I thought if Emma Thompson is playing a teapot I can certainly play a feather duster..." **MM**

BTA | 26 MAY 2017 *Star Wars: Episode VIII* opens in two years. *Concussion* and *The Free State Of Jones* open in 2016, and *Beauty And The Beast* opens in 2017.

**The One
To Watch**

agenda

The need-to-know...

BRIDGET JONES'S BABY

Renée Zellweger is reprising her role as neurotic publishing exec Bridget Jones for a long-awaited threequel. While plot details are scarce, it does seem that the film isn't being lifted from Helen Fielding's third book – *Mad About The Boy* – which controversially killed off a key character. Instead, *Baby* seems to be set at some point between the second and third novels, with Bridget coming to terms with motherhood. Hugh Grant won't appear this time, but Colin Firth's Mark Darcy returns, and Patrick Dempsey (*Grey's Anatomy*'s 'McDreamy') is on board to up the hunk quotient.



THE 33

The latest breathless survival film to vie for awards attention is based on a real-life event – the 2010 disaster in which, yep, 33 Chilean miners found themselves trapped more than 2,000ft below ground. Antonio Banderas plays the leader of the band of men, who tries to keep morale high when the chances of making it out are extremely low. The ever reliable Juliette Binoche is on board as a ground-level supporter. *The 33* looks at both sides of the crisis, also examining the political games involved in mounting a rescue mission. It's been a while since we've seen Banderas in a dramatic leading role, so hopefully his gravitas will ground the drama.

THE LEGO MOVIE 4D

If you can't wait until 2017 for *The LEGO Movie Sequel* and the block-based Batman spin-off, don't panic: Emmet and the gang are back for a newly-announced experience that'll be hitting Legoland resorts next year.



THE KILLING JOKE

The next animated movie from DC Comics and Warners could be even grittier than its predecessors, with reports hinting it could land an R-rating. The celebrated Alan Moore story might need expanding to make it feature-length though.



DIE HARD 6

The franchise that's as impossible to kill as its hero, *Die Hard*, looks set to be kicking off work on its sixth installment. Len Wiseman – the *Underworld* helmer who directed *Die Hard 4.0* – is returning, while the story is reported to be part prequel (young John McClane!) and part sequel. Expect that to be the only way in which it's compared to *The Godfather Part II*.



The scale

ON FIRE



Rebecca Ferguson
Ferguson's role in *The Girl On The Train* is in the bag, and she's being courted for *Alien: Paradise Lost* and *The Snowman* (both with Michael Fassbender).



Hulk
Marvel's angry green giant looks set to be making a reappearance after flying off at the end of *Ultron*. He's set to feature in *Thor: Ragnarok* with Chris Hemsworth's Norse hero.



Marc Webb
After being locked into the Spider-Man universe for his last couple of films, Webb is set for a fresh directorial effort. Chris Evans will star in *Gifted*, in which he cares for a, um, gifted child.



The Crow
After countless stalls, with various directors and actors exiting the project, it seems like *The Crow* is now permanently on ice. Comic creator James O'Barr still hopes it'll happen though.



Pan
The fairytale origin story looks like a box-office bust, after a disappointing theatrical opening. Sadly for Joe Wright's reboot, audiences seemed as down on the film as the critics were.

COOLING OFF

GODZILLA VS. KONG



Legendary Pictures and Warner Bros have confirmed that the two kaiju kings will soon

face off. First up is the Tom Hiddleston-starring *Kong: Skull Island*, due 2017, before *Godzilla 2* opens in 2018. Then, in 2020, *Godzilla Vs. Kong* arrives. "I've always wanted to see the ultimate showdown," says Legendary CEO Thomas Tull.



**The
Spotlight**

Grain of truth

AT ANY PRICE | Zac Efron digs deep for his role in Ramin Bahrani's rural seed saga.

I didn't want to make a corporate thriller," says Ramin Bahrani. "I wanted a drama." The writer-director behind recent repossession drama *99 Homes* is talking about *At Any Price*. Set in the world of modern agriculture and genetically modified seeds, his 2013 film – now finally getting a welcome UK release – stars Dennis Quaid as Henry Whipple, an Iowa corn magnate under investigation for patent infringement.

Researching the subject, Bahrani spent six months with farmers and seed-sellers in Iowa, Illinois and Indiana. "I kept hearing the same expressions wherever I went: 'Expand or die,' 'Get bigger or get out,'" he recalls. "I thought: 'My God, this is the philosophy of the world today.' This is the banking crisis; this is the European economic disaster. So I started to wonder what happens if a family values this expansion more than their neighbours, their community or even themselves."

At the film's core is a strained father-son dynamic, with Zac Efron cast as Quaid's offspring Dean, a tearaway with ambitions to be a stock-car racing driver. Bahrani was left impressed by the former *High School Musical* star. "Zac, he delivered," he says, "in ways that

no-one's expecting. No-one. I don't see how David Fincher could watch the movie and not say, 'I have to cast this guy in my next film.' He goes to some dark places."

With Bahrani drawing from a diverse range of influences, from Arthur Miller's *Death Of A Salesman* to *Bonnie And Clyde*, Efron also had his touchstones. "We looked a lot at Paul Newman and [1963 Texas-set drama] *Hud*," he says. "That was a movie we watched repeatedly throughout."

'What happens if a family values expansion more than themselves?'

He also looked to his 61-year-old co-star Quaid. "He's got a magic about him," Efron says. "I don't know how he does it." Bahrani agrees, with a chuckle. "He's still got a six-pack!" **JM**

ETA | 1 JANUARY 2016 *At Any Price* opens in the new year.

The price of love: *At Any Price* also features *It Follows*' Maika Monroe.

Fast times

Former teen heart-throb Zac Efron takes the wheel...



You come from a rural background. Is that what drew you to *At Any Price*?

I just know that when I read the material, I felt like I knew these people. I'd been around them my whole life. I was one of them to a degree. And there was an overwhelming desire for me as a young man to want to leave, to go spread my wings somewhere. Only now do I realise the extent of that emotion.

You did a lot of the driving shots yourself. What was it like to do the scene racing the stock-car through the cornfield?

I remember being pretty nervous on the day about this shot. But I was ready to go and as soon as I sat on the front seat, Ramin jumps in the window. There are no doors on this car, or seats or seatbelts! But he slides in and says, "I'm here with you, buddy! Don't crash!" And I'm like, "I got it!"

What criteria guides you now when choosing a film?

I think it's important to keep your expectations not too grand and choose the best work. Choose wisely. There's a lot of opportunities to make movies. Picking the right ones is important. Warren Beatty says a lot about that.

agenda

Eve Hewson is spying the big time.

“They wanted me to be a lawyer or architect or doctor,” laughs Eve Hewson, daughter of activist Ali Hewson and Paul David Hewson, aka U2’s Bono. Given the 24-year-old has worked with Paolo Sorrentino and Steven Soderbergh and is now starring for Steven Spielberg in *Bridge Of Spies*, her folks admit she chose correctly...

How was it playing Tom Hanks’ daughter?

Oh God. So perfect! I was pretty shaky on my first day, but Steven will chat to you like a normal human being, even though you’re staring at him, going, “Oh my God, that’s Steven Spielberg!” And for Tom, it’s his living room. He feels very comfortable.

Was it different to teaming with Sorrentino and Soderbergh?

Paolo [This Must Be The Place] is like Spielberg in that he’s very quiet, very focused, and the set is intimate. Soderbergh... on *The Knick*, we did seven to 10 pages a day! He’s directing, he’s the DP, he’s the editor.

You’ve signed to play Maid Marian opposite Taron Egerton in *Robin Hood: Origins*...

I read with Taron and he’s incredible. Marian was a pioneer. All I can really say is I’m excited to give it a crack and I think it’s going to be a new take on the role.

Have you inherited your dad’s musical ability?

I did not inherit the singing, which is probably good for my ego because I would have loved to have been a pop star! But I did grow up playing the drums and guitar... JG

ETA | 27 NOVEMBER *Bridge Of Spies* opens this month.

The Talent

‘I’m excited to give playing Maid Marian a crack’



KERRY HALLIHAN / AUGUST

A different tech

Talking tech-heads: Gibney's documentary interviews those with first-hand experience to discover the real Steve Jobs.

STEVE JOBS: THE MAN IN THE MACHINE | A new doc by Alex Gibney looks for the truth behind the hype...

“Lately it seems like I’ve been making films about stuff I don’t know a lot about,” admits Oscar-winning documentarian Alex Gibney. Not a particular expert on Apple or technology when he set out to make a film about Steve Jobs, Gibney soon discovered some unsavoury things about everyone’s favourite black polo neck wearer...

What was the biggest surprise for you in researching this film?

I think the biggest surprise was that his genius wasn’t what I’d thought it was. He wasn’t an engineer; he wasn’t really an inventor; I think what he really was, was a great storyteller and a great performer. He sold those products better than anybody.

Have you seen Danny Boyle’s *Steve Jobs*?

I did. I liked it. I found it interesting that he focused on three product presentations, which I think seems right. He was obsessed with how to present the company, and how to perform that role as the grand vizier of Apple. When other high-ranking executives would talk to

the press, he’d ream them out. Like, “What are you doing? I talk to the outside world, not you.” After a while people got comfortable with that idea, but it was pretty intense for a while, the way he had to be the only face of Apple...

In the film, [former Apple employee] Daniel Kottke asks, “How much of an asshole do you need to be to succeed?” What do you think?

A lot of people say, “Well, successful people aren’t always nice.” I really don’t think that’s the point. I think it’s about abuse of power. He was an extremely powerful person sitting astride the world’s most valuable corporation and a lot of his cruelty was not only unnecessary, but was part of the corporate ethos. Steve would say, “Look, our job is to make money for shareholders and to make beautiful products.” But honestly, in this day and age, when the Earth is burning up and we have a huge disparity between rich and poor, if you



couch yourself as the company that thinks different, well, show me the ‘think different’.

Have you had much backlash from Apple fans over your criticisms of Jobs?

Some people just get absolutely furious. It’s almost religious. I found that interesting because I’d just finished a film on the Church of Scientology, and there is an aspect of Apple which engenders a cult-like vibe.

Do you still use Apple products yourself?

I do, and in the film I admit that I believed that Apple represented something different. I felt like I was taking on the Man when I used an Apple product. I feel a little bit differently now, although I still use Apple products. I see them more as tools than as an extension of myself. **SD**

ETA | 2 NOVEMBER *Steve Jobs: The Man In The Machine* is out now.

*‘Aspects of
Apple engender
a cult-like vibe’*

Adults only

Love's lovers: (l-r) Karl Glusman, Aomi Muyock and Klara Kristin give an unfettered sexual performance.

LOVE | Gaspar Noé brings us his most jaw-dropping film yet – a 3D three-way love story featuring hardcore sex.

What I wanted to portray was passion with a lot of sex," says Gaspar Noé. "It's not an adult movie." The provocative 51-year-old director behind *Irréversible* and *Enter The Void* is talking about his new film, *Love*, an epic sex odyssey shot in 3D. Despite the use of full-on hardcore sex – twosomes, threesomes, S&M and so on – Noé is careful to underline this is no porn flick. Rather, it's a surprisingly tender story about Murphy (Karl Glusman), an American film student in Paris, and his relations with two girls (Klara Kristin, Aomi Muyock).

Noé was planning *Love* even before his shocking 2002 film, the backwards rape-revenge drama *Irréversible*. He asked its stars, former married couple Vincent Cassel and Monica Bellucci, if they'd consider making a film with real sex. "They said the only private thing they had as a couple was their sexuality and exposing it would be too much. It was their only intimacy, and she already had a few stalkers around. If she excites men even more than she usually does, it could turn into a real nightmare."

After detouring into his drug-fuelled odyssey *Enter The Void*, Noé returned to *Love*, casting actors who were willing to engage in sex on camera. "All the sex scenes, we shot in the first week," Noé reveals. "If we fail with those scenes, the movie is not going to work, so it's better to start with them. If the actors freak out, then we can replace them before we shoot all the rest." So did Glusman ever resort to using Viagra to help with his, er, performance?

"Ask the actor – I don't know his secrets!"

While the Buenos Aires-born Noé has been planning *Love* for years, he was rather beaten to the punch when Lars von Trier released his own sex odyssey, *Nymphomaniac*. "I was happy," shrugs Noé. "You cannot copyright sex. His movie is more transgressive than mine and more provocative. All the sex inserts and details are very extreme; whether they were simulated or post-produced, they're punk images of hardcore sex which is not my case at all."

Another way he intends to differ from *Nymphomaniac* is the issue of censorship. Von

'We shot the sex first in case the actors freaked out'



Trier's film was initially released in a truncated version, and while *Love* runs to a healthy 135 minutes, Noé is unequivocal when it comes to the distribution of his film. "One cut. Buy it or leave it." Thankfully, British viewers will get to see the, ahem, whole package – including a rather bountiful money shot delivered directly to camera (and filmed on the very first day of the shoot). CGI? "Not all of it," he grins, "but we added a little bit of sperm." **JM**

ETA | 20 NOVEMBER *Love* is in cinemas this month.



Credit sting

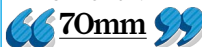
➤ Captain Marvel won't be the first female superhero in the MCU to get her name into a movie title, now that sequel *Ant-Man And The Wasp* has been announced. Evangeline Lilly will be back as Hope van Dyne and her miniature alter ego, alongside Paul Rudd's Scott Lang. The film's 2018 opening means *Black Panther*'s release date has been pulled forward slightly, while *Captain Marvel* has been pushed back to the following February. Elsewhere on the schedule, three untitled Marvel movies are now slated for release in 2020. Start speculating now... **MM**

ETA 6 JULY 2018 *Ant-Man And The Wasp* opens in three years.

Plain talking

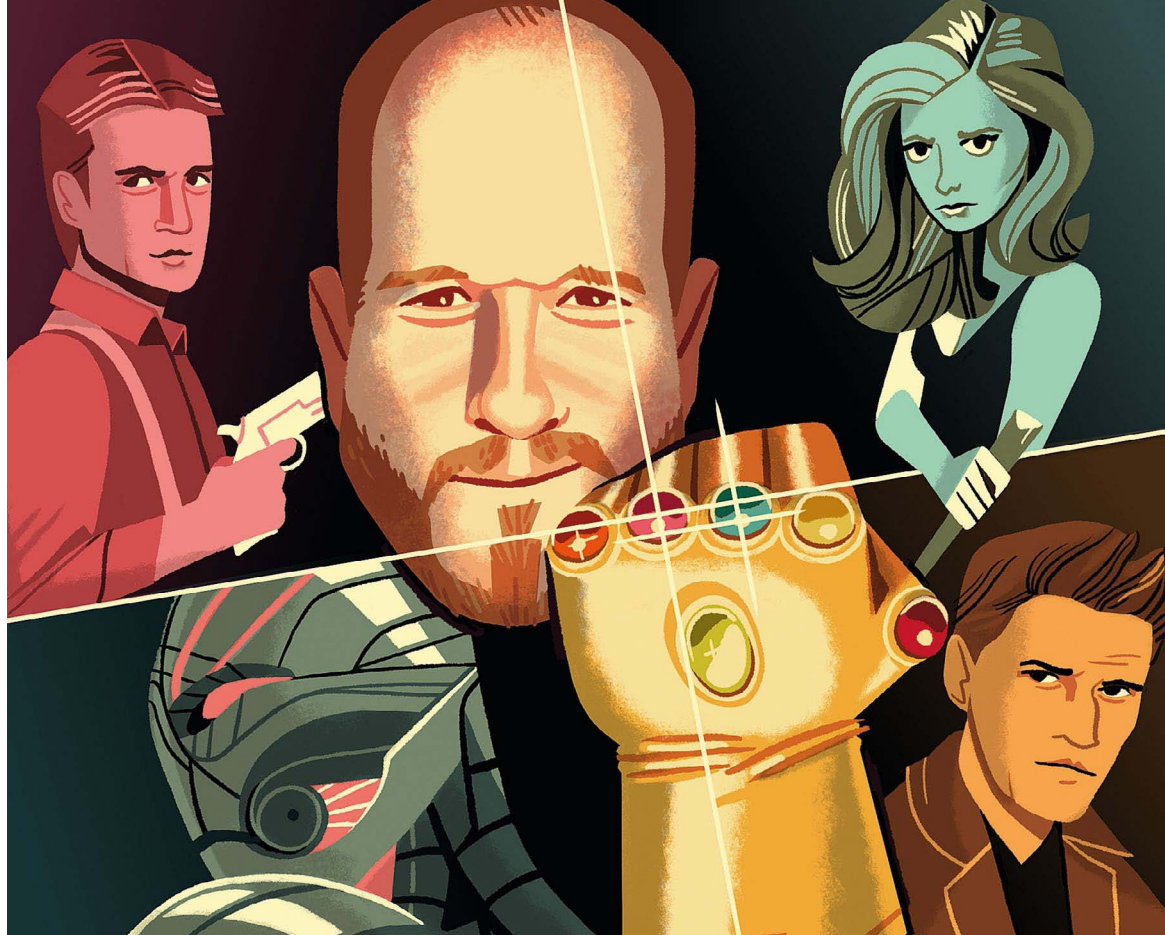
Learn the movie lingo

This month:



The king of film formats. The standard gauge for cinematic film is 35mm so using 70mm gives strikingly detailed results. The projected image takes up 65mm, with the remaining 5mm used for the soundtrack. Recent 70mm-ers include *The Master* and *The Hateful Eight*.

ILLUSTRATION: GLEN BROGAN



Career injection

JOSS WHEDON | *Buffy* continued, *Firefly* relaunched... Nice idea, but what about new Whedon worlds?

There's a lot of good sand in this box, I'm not going to lie," said Joss Whedon about his time in the MCU. Now that he's left Kevin Feige's playground, Whedon hardly has an issue with low-running supplies. It's more a case of options multiplied, a potential crisis of proliferation. Basically, look at all this sand: where do you start building?

If this is cause for excitement among Whedon-watchers, that's not to knock his *Avengers* achievements. He made every character count, nailed the Hulk, gave us "Puny god"... If *Age Of Ultron* wobbled slightly, don't blame Whedon. When a cocktail stick can't hold an over-stacked burger together, it doesn't mean the cocktail stick has failed. It means the burger had fundamental architectural flaws, like a film with more key characters than it could possibly hope to contain.

As with *Ultron*, so with Whedon. Fans want everything from him – but a little realism may be called for. 'Browncoats' would love to see his short-lived sci-fi western *Firefly* relaunched. After all, if *The X-Files* and *Twin Peaks* can reopen... Whedon back on TV would make us cheer too, especially now that his clout might provide

insulation from network/studio butt-ins. But could *Firefly* 2 hit hopes heightened by fan fantasies of what might have been?

Sure, Whedon has pulled off the seemingly impossible before, from *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*'s 'Hush' (his sassy verbal skill set tethered to a near-silent TV episode) to the *Avengers*' team-play. But why not think beyond his past highs or hiccups? Maybe he could re-indulge his DC curiosities, after his spurned *Wonder Woman*/Batman bids. Perhaps he could repeat his offer to buy the *Terminator* rights for \$10,000 and give us a decent film?

Or, he could do what we really want. Much as we'd love more of 2008's lovingly larky *Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog*, the tales he hasn't yet told are the most intriguing. *Twist*, his new comic about a Victorian female Batman-alike, is one such; *Goners*, an old, female-led, mystical-humanist horror script, is another. The other is the great unknown. "It's been way too long since I created a universe," Whedon said recently, sending music to the ears of anyone dreaming of life beyond reboots/re-imaginings. Since he's probably in a position to call some shots, Whedon's best might be yet to come. **KH**

FIVE POINT FIX...

1 "I love westerns," Whedon's said. "It's the old guy that matters." Grizzly Whedon western? We like.

2 Get TV-sized again. Long-form narratives suit Whedon's humanising, complex characters and frayed intimacies.

3 Write for *Doctor Who*. *Buffy* inspired *Who*'s revival: Whedon could play from Skaro to Gallifrey...

4 Or deliver a new, iconic female hero with Doctor-ish staying power. Maybe *Goners* holds the key.

5 But if he really fancied reuniting *Serenity*'s crew for TV specials or a mini-series? We're in.

agenda

The Hero

Bruce Dern

The Tinseltown old-timer who's young at heart.

Bruce Dern's six-decade career has encompassed classic sci-fi, two Hitchcocks and more westerns than even his pin-sharp mind can remember. There's little he hasn't done. Now 79, he'll shortly be seen in Tarantino's *The Hateful Eight* as a chair-bound, ornery bastard. In real life, though, he's the perfect gentleman, regaling *Agenda* with over an hour of prime anecdotalage...

How would you describe *The Hateful Eight*?

Quentin is very much a devotee of what has gone before, and as far as I'm concerned the man made an opera. You have never seen characters like this in a western in your life, and the dialogue is better than anything I've ever seen.

Tell us about Sanford Smithers...

I play an old Southern general who really existed who won the Battle of Baton Rouge. It was the first time the North used uniformed cavalry officers who were black, and I was responsible for killing every fucking one! They all died except one, and that's Samuel L. Jackson. Fourteen years later we end up in a cabin together...

How did you find filming in Colorado with Sam, Kurt Russell et al?

We had no heat in this little cabin in Telluride, so it would be seven below zero in the morning. Then we went back to Hollywood and he built the same set on a soundstage he'd had refrigerated – all so he could see our

Well Dern: (top to bottom) in *Silent Running*, Hitchcock's *Family Plot*, and Tarantino's *The Hateful Eight*.



'Quentin's dialogue is better than anything I've ever seen'

breath! And we were on set a long time, 161 days. Every scene had to be done eight times, in CinemaScope, from eight points of view.

What was Hollywood like when you started out?

The lucky thing for my generation was we had the chance to work with legends who were bigger than life. I started with a legend; in 1958 I was put under contract by Elia Kazan. And the first play I was in was directed by Lee Strasberg. You can't be bigger than life today, unless you're Clint.

Hitchcock must have been bigger than life, in every way...

In 1963 I did *Marnie* for Mr Hitchcock, then later he asked me to do *Family Plot*, when his neck was so big he couldn't turn his head to look at you. At the end of the first day he went to get up off his chair, but his girth was so big that the chair came with him! So I grabbed the back legs so he could walk out of it.

Forty years on, *Silent Running* is considered a classic...

Douglas Trumbull was a genius because when he looked through a viewfinder he saw magic. We made the movie for \$900,000 on an aircraft carrier and those domes, those geodesic domes, were made in his garage. I went in and it was like Santa's workshop.

You've been Oscar-nominated twice, once for *Coming Home* in 1979 and more recently for *Nebraska*. How does it feel?

I appreciated it enormously, but to me the nomination is the win; you cannot consider that your performance is better than four other people's. It's really wonderful, though. Two years ago I was there with *Nebraska* and Laura [Dern] went with me, and last year she was there with *Wild* and I went there with her.

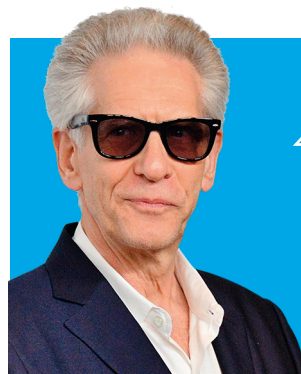
How did you feel about your daughter following in your footsteps?

When she was nine years old, Laura told me she wanted to be an actress and asked me for some advice. I told her she would never have a better audience than the one on set. They have to be there, so if you can get their fucking attention you know you're doing good. **NS**

ETA 18 JANUARY *The Hateful Eight* opens next year. For more *Hateful Eight* see p80.

Sound bites

Quotable dialogue from this month's movies – and their stars...



"I considered it but I thought that the script was bad, so I didn't do it. In TV, the director is just a traffic cop."

David Cronenberg turned down the chance to direct the *True Detective* Season 2 pilot.

"Just saying' can get you buried real quick." Whitey Bulger (**Johnny Depp**) lays it out in *Black Mass*.



"Whenever I think of *The Parole Officer*, I squirm. And when someone says they like it, I think, 'Really, why?'" **Steve Coogan** on regrettable roles.

"If you look at films like *Elektra* and *Aeon Flux*, the problem that studios have is that they try to make kickass women very sexualised."

Jessica Chastain on the major problem with many female action roles.



"I've never actually met Jared Leto. We worked together for 6 months and we've never exchanged a word outside of 'action' and 'cut'. I've only ever spoken to him as Deadshot and him as The Joker." **Will Smith** has never 'met' his *Suicide Squad* co-star.



"When I'm advocating using film, [*studio heads*] say 'at the end of the day, doesn't storytelling trump everything?' I say 'No it doesn't, otherwise we'd be making radio plays – it would be a lot cheaper.'"

Christopher Nolan is still championing the use of film.



"If I did another Bond movie, it would only be for the money."

Daniel Craig gets down to business.

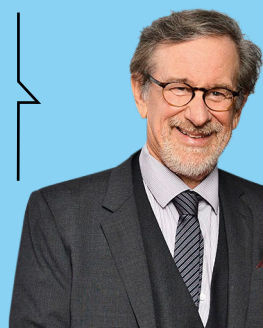


"You know what I'd like to do? I'd like to do some big superhero villain in some Marvel classic."

Bryan Cranston really wants to go bad.

"Harrison and I did four movies, Tom [*Hanks*] and I have done four movies. Now I'll probably do an *Indy 5* with Harrison, [*so*] it'll be five for Harrison, four for Tom."

Steven Spielberg plays favourites.

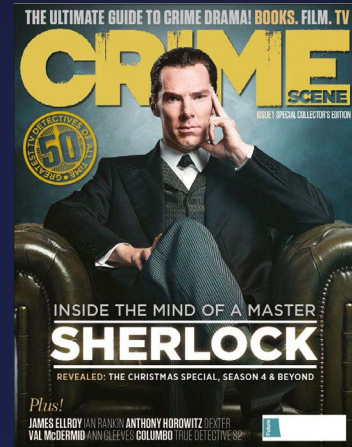


"Everyone deserves a defence. Every person matters." The wisdom of James Donovan (**Tom Hanks**) in *Bridge Of Spies*.



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Every new movie reviewed & rated Screen

★★★★★ OUTSTANDING ★★★★★ VERY GOOD ★★★★★ GOOD ★★ DISAPPOINTING ★ RUBBISH

FILM OF THE MONTH

'Blanchett and Mara deliver a love story to melt to in *Carol*'

NEW RELEASES 20.11.15 - 17.12.15

OUT NOW

Angels Vs Bullies	★★★	p51
Burnt	★★	p49
A Christmas Star	★★	p54
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 2	★★★★	p44
The Last Witch Hunter	★	p59
Orthodox	★★	p56
Paranormal Activity: The Ghost Dimension	★	p57
Revenge Of The Mekons	★★★★	p54
Scouts Guide To The Apocalypse	★★	p51
A Sicilian Dream	★★★	p50
SPECTRE	★★★★	p52

20 NOVEMBER

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Star*Men	★★★★	p57
Steve McQueen: The Man And Le Mans	★★★★	p59
True Romance	★★★★★	p50

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Bridge Of Spies	★★★★★	p48
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Doctor Zhivago	★★★★	p54
My Skinny Sister	★★★★	p57
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11 DECEMBER

The Forbidden Room	★★★★	p50
Grandma	★★★★	p50
Grazing The Sky	★★★	p57
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Ice And The Sky	★★★★	p50
Peggy Guggenheim: Art Addict	★★★	p49
Shelter	★★	p49
When Harry Met Sally	★★★★★	p55

ALSO RELEASED

We couldn't see them in time for this issue, so head to gamesradar.com/totalfilm for reviews of the following:

TITLE	RELEASE DATE
By The Sea	11 December
Christmas With The Coopers	4 December
The Good Dinosaur	27 November
Krampus	4 December
The Night Before	4 December
The Perfect Guy	20 November
Star Wars: The Force Awakens	17 December
Victor Frankenstein	4 December

For more reviews visit totalfilm.com/reviews



Find out if Jen is queen of the screen on p44



The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 2

★★★★★ Out now Capitol punishment.

THERE'S A LOT riding on this one, but the odds are stacked in its favour. It's hard to overestimate the impact of the *Hunger Games* film franchise. Adapted from Suzanne Collins' YA book trilogy, the three movies thus far have grossed over \$2bn and made a star of Jennifer Lawrence. Her resourceful hunter-survivor Katniss Everdeen shines a light on the dearth of great female leads in modern blockbusters. So it's a relief that, as a saga-closer, *Mockingjay – Part 2* hits the target.

It's a noticeable improvement on last year's draggy *Part 1*. Picking up with Katniss

in rebel base District 13, where she's recovering from the attack by brainwashed Peeta (Josh Hutcherson), it doesn't take long for boots to hit the ground and war to kick off. After spending the whole of the last film deliberating, Katniss is ready to take action against the Capitol. Claiming the head of President Snow (Donald Sutherland, deliciously despicable as ever) is at the top of her to-do list, even if that means defying the orders of the power-hungry leader of District 13, President Coin (Julianne Moore).

While Collins ditched her own formula for the third book by leaving out any actual Games, *Mockingjay – Part 2* more closely apes the structure of the first two films, with the booby-trapped Capitol making for

an impressive ersatz arena as the action is televised and beamed to the masses. Screens are illuminated with the day's 'kills', displayed along with the Games' musical theme. Torrents of tar, motion-sensitive machine guns and the freakiest mutts yet await Katniss and co as they make their way through the city to Snow's safehouse. The scale of the action is impressive, from the helijet bombings and the abandoned cityscapes, to the teeming crowds of extras.

Squad goals

That said, some of the most impressive set-pieces take place on a much smaller scale, the highlight being a particularly tense subterranean showdown, with



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING
2003

The multiple endings of Peter Jackson's trilogy-closer are recalled in *Mockingjay*'s wrap-up.

WINTER'S BONE
2010

Star Jennifer Lawrence earned her first Oscar nom as a tough, resourceful teen taking care of her family. Sound familiar?

THE HUNGER GAMES
2012

The film that started it all: a gritty survival actioner that proved YA needn't be the preserve of tweens.

For full reviews of these films visit totalfilm.com/reviews

They grimly persisted with their two-woman conga.

'This is assured and confident franchise filmmaking'

films, anyone outside of the central Katniss-Peeta-Gale triptych struggles to get a word in, limiting the emotional impact of some of the farewells. You might end up feeling that your particular favourite got shortchanged. Newcomers get even less to work with. Let's hope Gwendoline Christie has a more substantial presence in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* than her single scene here.

Power of Jen

Thankfully, Jennifer Lawrence is predictably superb. At this point, you wouldn't expect any less. The Oscar-winner once again imbues Katniss with an utterly convincing steeliness that's offset by a subtly played vulnerability. It's this performance that has been such a key hook for the series as a whole, and never more so than here. If there's a poignancy that comes from knowing that she'll (probably) never be seen on screen as the character again, that feeling is boosted by a couple of low-key moments for the late Philip Seymour Hoffman in his final posthumous role.

To the series' credit, the stakes feel genuinely high. It's a welcome quality in a blockbuster landscape dominated by inconsequential CGI-smackdown climaxes. OK, so it's hard not to see the decision to split the final book into two films as a cynical one – a single *Mockingjay* film might've made for a more urgent conclusion. But for anyone who has been keenly following the series, it's impossible to see *Part 2* as anything other than a satisfying ending. Staying true to the source material and refusing to talk down to its audience (as well as once again pushing the 12A rating to its limits) this is assured and confident franchise filmmaking. After the dust has settled on this instalment, its absence will be keenly felt. Let's hope, like the *Mockingjay*, its legacy can continue to inspire. **Matt Maytum**

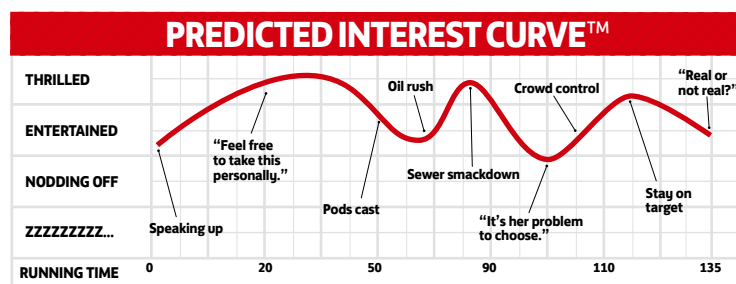
THE VERDICT Jennifer Lawrence shines once again in a fitting send-off for cinema's best YA franchise. The hefty action and high stakes outweigh any shortcomings.

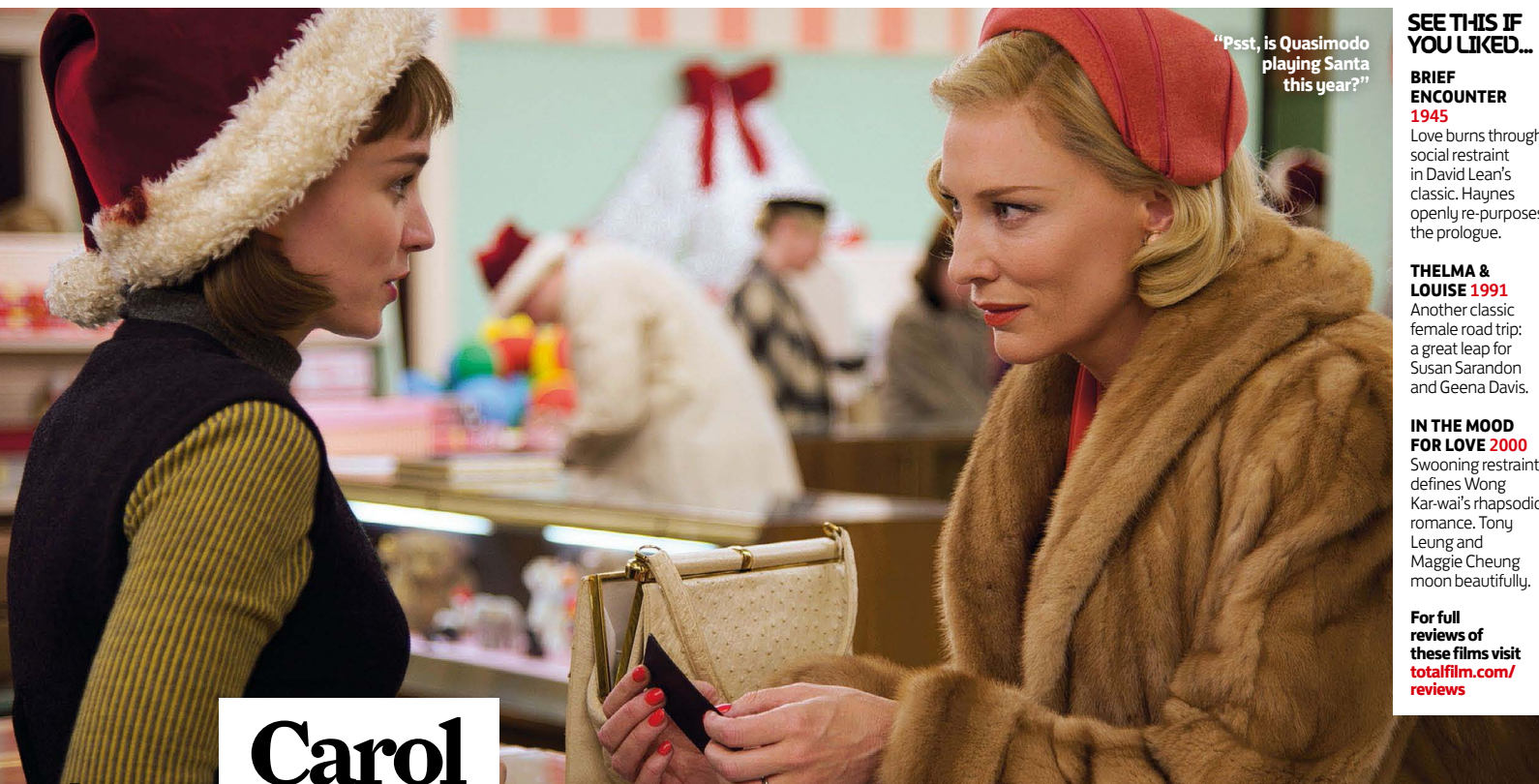
► **Certificate 12A** Director Francis Lawrence **Starring** Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth, Donald Sutherland, Julianne Moore, Sam Claflin, Natalie Dormer **Screenplay** Peter Craig, Danny Strong **Distributor** Lionsgate **Running time** 137 mins

director Francis Lawrence (who has been with the series since *Catching Fire*) ratcheting up the claustrophobia. And while the special-effects budget is flaunted on the screen for all to see, there's still time for the pointed satirical messages that have always separated the franchise from its more lightweight peers; Katniss sets off on her mission as the figurehead of the 'Star Squad', an elite team whose objective is to tag along and film propaganda videos in relative safety. The cost of war – and its rules – is ruminated on frequently.

Trying to cram so much into an action-heavy narrative does lead to some clunky moments and the dialogue can

occasionally jar. Perhaps not unexpectedly, the majority of the supporting players get short shrift. The love triangle between Katniss, Peeta and Liam Hemsworth's Gale might be nearing its conclusion, but it's as inconsequential to the overall story as it has ever been, meaning it's hard to care all that much about its outcome. With so many characters accumulated over the last three





Carol

★★★★★ Out 27 November The look of love...

HE USED TO MAKE BRACING art-core films, but Todd Haynes and classic Hollywood style have got a thing going now. After riffs on *Citizen Kane* (*Velvet Goldmine*), Douglas Sirk (*Far From Heaven*) and noir/melodrama (TV's *Mildred Pierce* remake), Haynes is a perfect fit for *Carol*, crafted from writer Phyllis Nagy's long-nurtured adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's 1952 novel *The Price Of Salt*. A romance so gorgeously played its riches seem effortless, Haynes' movie is a ravishing seduction in a vintage mould: stealthy, swooning cinema to relish.

The director's control is clear the moment he segues from the title sequence across rainy '50s Manhattan streets to a charged restaurant encounter: all rhyming gestures, loaded looks, suggestive words. An innocent "Likewise" drips with feeling. We flash back in time, to department-store attendant Therese (Rooney Mara) locking

eyes with married mother Carol (Cate Blanchett). Attraction sparks across the dead-eyed china-doll floor: one "leave the glove behind" ruse later, love blooms.

Carol's estranged husband and repressive '50s America complicate matters, but Haynes avoids heated melodrama. With slow-burn focus, he zeroes in on Carol/Therese to show how love emerges from a grey backdrop to consume them, a contrast beautifully conveyed by the film's style. Departing from *Far From Heaven*'s sumptuous flushes, Haynes and DoP Ed Lachman sketch emotional currents in smoke-stained sepia with flashes of red, like an Edward Hopper painting pulsing with yearning; Carter Burwell's score moons to their tune.

The to-die-for cast tune in too, etching character studies in fine detail. Blanchett's full-bore charisma – total Bette Davis – nails how tough a to-be-divorced mum in the '50s would have to be, yet she somehow taps reserves of feeling for later shows of tenderness and turmoil. At another extreme, Mara's inscrutable

reserve makes sense of a young woman trying to find herself, on alert for a revelatory return gaze through those popping eyes (she's a would-be photographer – looking means everything here). On the fringes, Sarah Paulson exudes savvy in the best friend role and Kyle Chandler imbues a potentially hateful hubby with caricature-busting conviction.

Some jolting shocks on a Christmas road trip are the closest *Carol* comes to Highsmith's twisty *Mr. Ripley* mode. Otherwise, everything from a sensitive sex scene to an agonising custody battle orbits around

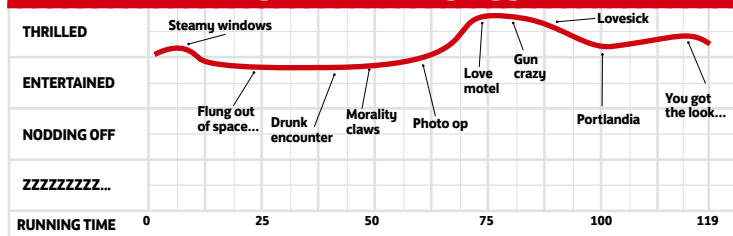
Carol and Therese's intense attraction with an understated focus so sure, you hardly even notice its hypnotic hold until the grip releases at the sublime climax. "You're in a trance," Therese is told. Likewise.

Kevin Harley

THE VERDICT Under Haynes' sure hand, Blanchett and Mara deliver a love story to melt to. Every glance means something, no strain shows: it's filmmaking as natural as breathing.

► **Certificate 15** Director Todd Haynes Starring Cate Blanchett, Rooney Mara, Kyle Chandler, Jake Lacy, Sarah Paulson Screenplay Phyllis Nagy Distributor StudioCanal Running time 119 mins

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™



When Whitey said
"Pull my finger"
no-one dared refuse.



Black Mass

★★★★☆ Out 27 November Little Whitey lies...

HAVING BEEN HIT-AND-MISS IN his previous portrayals of real-life criminals (coke kaiser George Jung in *Blow*, mobster John Dillinger in *Public Enemies*), Johnny Depp finally hits the mother lode in *Black Mass*, an enthralling portrait of Boston bruiser James 'Whitey' Bulger that halts the star's mid-career slump with all the force of a baseball bat in the kisser. Barely recognisable behind a balding pate, ice-blue contact lenses and a pirate-y bad tooth (perhaps the only link here to Captain Jack Sparrow), Depp serves up a chillingly amoral turn that will almost certainly secure his fourth Oscar nomination. Yet he's far from the only reason to catch Scott Cooper's (*Out Of The Furnace*) gripping cops and robbers tale, a film that, like *The Departed* before it, blurs the lines that separate these supposedly inviolable factions.

Divided, overly neatly maybe, into three acts that span a decade (1975 to 1985) of nefarious activity, *Black Mass* tells how Bulger, a small-time hood from Boston's close-knit 'Southie' neighbourhood, was encouraged to turn snitch by an old schoolmate turned G-Man who was prepared to give him a free pass if he helped bring down the city's Italian-American Mafiosi. Out to impress and keen to advance, FBI agent John Connolly (Joel Edgerton) thinks he has made the deal of the century. Once the gangsters are gone, though, Whitey swiftly sets about shoring up his own illegal empire, knowing he has too much on Connolly for the

Feds to intervene. clearly fully aware that two great actors going head to head in a room can be as potent as any bullet ballet or ruthless execution. A scene in which Connolly attempts to ensnare Bulger's Teflon politician brother (Benedict Cumberbatch) is a treat to behold, as is that much-trailed episode in which Depp goes Joe Pesci

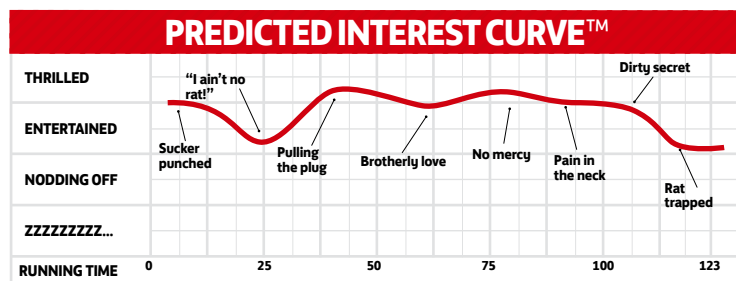
'The dialogue carries an even greater charge than the carnage'

on one of Edgerton's subordinates. In a film in which even the lowliest thug gets a moment to shine, though, it's a shame the female characters are so poorly shaped and scripted: the likes of Dakota Johnson, Julianne

Nicholson and Juno Temple spending the majority of their screen time being harangued or mistreated. **Neil Smith**

THE VERDICT Though the women could be stronger and the accents occasionally jar, Cooper's study of moral corruption enthralls. The Johnny-ssance starts here!

► **Certificate 15** **Director** Scott Cooper **Starring** Levi Miller, Hugh Jackman, Johnny Depp, Joel Edgerton, Kevin Bacon, Benedict Cumberbatch, Dakota Johnson, Peter Sarsgaard **Screenplay** Jez Butterworth, Mark Mallouk **Distributor** Warner Bros **Running time** 123 mins





SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

SAVING PRIVATE RYAN 1998

Actual rather than Cold War in Spielberg and Hanks' seminal first team-up.

MUNICH 2005

Spielberg at his most sombre and suspenseful, charting Israeli-Palestinian tensions.

THE LIVES OF OTHERS 2006

Oscar-winning dissection of Stasi machinations in East Germany.

For full reviews of these films visit totalfilm.com/reviews

Tom had a flashback to *Road To Perdition*.

Bridge Of Spies

★★★★★ Out 27 November The art of knowing when to swap...

IN 1957, WITH THE COLD WAR at its most ice-bound, Soviet spy Rudolph Abel (Mark Rylance) is arrested in New York by the FBI. Reluctantly, lawyer James Donovan (Tom Hanks) agrees to defend him, arguing in court that Abel's no traitor but a brave man serving his country. The outcome of the trial sees Donovan incur widespread public hostility...

But then US pilot Gary Powers is shot down over Russia in his U-2 spy-plane – and Donovan, yet more reluctantly, is persuaded by the CIA to travel to East Berlin and negotiate a swap, though with no official government backing. At which point, just to complicate things further, the Berlin Wall goes up – and a naïve American student, Frederic Pryor, is trapped behind it and jailed. Donovan conceives an impossible notion – a two-for-one swap. All he has

to do is somehow persuade the CIA, the Soviet government and the East German government – all with their own conflicting agendas – to go along with him...

It's fascinating to imagine how John Le Carré might have handled this real-life spy-swap story. But this is Steven Spielberg – so for all the treachery, bad faith and compromise involved, we still fight through to an upbeat ending.

Hanks, his furrowed brow and bewildered eyes offset by the firmness of his jaw, is as good as he's ever been as a man determinedly pushing his concept of justice against near-insuperable odds. But he's almost outacted by Rylance, whose Abel is a wonderfully sly portrait

'Hanks, as good as he's ever been, is almost outacted by Mark Rylance'

of a gifted man concealing his intelligence behind the drabest of facades. "You don't seem worried," Donovan remarks as the prosecution demands the spy's death. "Would it help?" comes the deadpan response.

Spielberg skilfully captures the paranoid

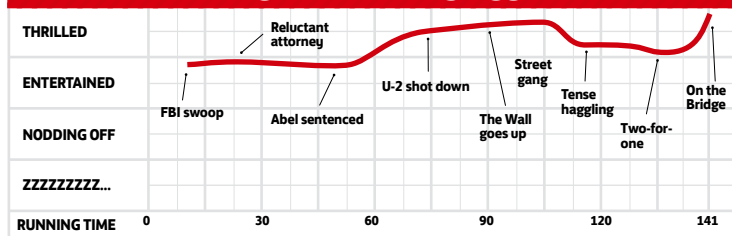
mood of the era and the barbed political labyrinth Donovan has to negotiate in trying to reconcile all the mutually suspicious interests involved. The tension of the climax on Berlin's wintry nocturnal Glienicke Bridge, snipers poised on all sides, is utterly nail-gnawing. To collaborate on British playwright Matt Charman's original script

Spielberg called in the Coen brothers, no less, and their sardonic touch makes itself relishably felt – take the scene in East Berlin's Soviet Embassy where Donovan's confronted by the phony bunch cobbled together as Abel's 'family', all headscarves, expostulations and theatrical weeping fits. The film's only disappointment is Amy Ryan, stuck with the 'worried but supportive wife at home' role. **Philip Kemp**

THE VERDICT Political intrigue abounds as Spielberg grippingly recreates a famous real-life spy-swap case of the Cold War, with both Hanks and Rylance on top form.

► **Certificate 12A Director** Steven Spielberg **Starring** Tom Hanks, Mark Rylance, Scott Shepherd, Amy Ryan, Alan Alda **Screenplay** Matt Charman, Joel Coen, Ethan Coen **Distributor** Fox **Running time** 141 mins

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™





Burnt

★★★★☆ Out now Full metal saucepan.

THIS BRADLEY COOPER vehicle sees the star don chef's whites as two-star Michelin man Adam Jones. "If you're a chef," we're told, "he's like the Rolling Stones." We know this because he's had a terrible addiction problem – drinks, drugs, women – and he wears a leather jacket and rides a motorbike. With the clichés stacking like a side order of chips, the early signs don't look good for *Burnt*.

Scripted by Steven Knight (*Locke*, *Eastern Promises*), the film is slightly better than the iffy marketing campaign might have you believe (tagline: "Never underestimate a man with everything to lose"). But only just. The prologue shows us how Cooper's masterchef left behind debts and his late mentor in Paris and went to New Orleans to shuck one million oysters (literally) as "penance" for his ways.

Now he's in London, trying to round up his old cooking crew to launch a new restaurant and get that elusive third Michelin star. Those reluctantly in for the ride include Daniel Brühl's maitre d', whose ailing father is bankrolling the venture (as long as Jones stays clean – cue a minor role for Emma Thompson as his doctor). Also along for the ride is Sienna Miller as a single-mum sous chef.

Scenes in the kitchen of Jones and his gang crafting culinary delights are invigoratingly filmed by director John Wells (*August: Osage County*) – even if *Burnt* dishes up one too many prep montages. Cooper is also credible as the devilish talent who is striving to deliver "culinary orgasms", shouting and stomping his way around the kitchen like a boot-camp sergeant major.

It's outside of the kitchen that the film really loses heat. The sexual tension between Cooper and *American Sniper* co-star Miller? Yawn-inducing. The subplot that sees drug dealers chasing Jones for dough? Lacklustre. The other subplot involving Alicia Vikander as Jones' mentor's daughter? It goes absolutely nowhere. And so on and so on. Like the title suggests, all of this feels like it's been under the grill for too long. **James Mottram**

THE VERDICT With a script as bland as they come there's little chance of Cooper/Miller recapturing their *American Sniper* chemistry. A messy hotchpotch of ingredients, *Burnt* lacks substance where it counts.

► **Certificate 15 Director** John Wells **Starring** Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller, Alicia Vikander, Uma Thurman, Lily James, Emma Thompson **Screenplay** Steven Knight **Distributor** Entertainment **Running time** 100 mins

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

HELL'S KITCHEN 2005 – Gordon Ramsay serves as *Burnt*'s 'chef consultant' (and part of its inspiration).

AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY 2013 Sparks fly around the dinner table in John Wells' earlier effort.

CHEF 2014 Disgraced restaurateur Jon Favreau hits the road (to redemption).

For full reviews of these films visit totalfilm.com/reviews



SHELTER

★★★★☆ Out 11 December

PAUL BETTANY'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUT casts his wife Jennifer Connelly as a homeless New York junkie who, at one point, injects heroin into her crotch. (That's very nice dear, but could you just buy me some flowers next time?) Into her life comes fellow down-and-out Tahir (Anthony Mackie), a Nigerian immigrant with a violent past. Gradually we learn of the reasons they are on the streets, and together they forge a bond that blossoms into romance when they stumble upon an apartment left empty for the summer. This, though, is only a brief respite from misery in a film whose good intentions and poetic flourishes can't mask its prevailing dramatic clunkiness.

Neil Smith

► **Certificate 18 Running time** 106 mins



PEGGY GUGGENHEIM: ART ADDICT

★★★★☆ Out 11 December

AS CHIC, ART-FOCUSED AND WELL connected as its subject – legendary collector and museum-maker Peggy Guggenheim – this sleek doc looks briskly rather than deeply at a life spent buying and bedding modern art's great names, from Marcel Duchamp to Jackson Pollock. Plump with art-world anecdote and glossy archive footage – Peggy swung with the '20s Surrealists in Paris, and introduced Kandinsky and Rothko to wartime London and New York – it's missing the fun and flamboyance of director Lisa Immordino Vreeland's similar voyage round Diana Vreeland. Still, it conveys Peggy's acquisitive acumen: "My motto was 'Buy a picture a day', and I lived up to it." **Kate Stables**

► **Certificate TBC Running time** 97 mins



Lily Tomlin stars in:
Harry Redknapp,
Transfer Day.

Grandma

★★★★☆ Out 11 December Tiger Lily...

THE SORT OF NANA MORE likely to kick your boyfriend in the balls than bake him a cake, Lily Tomlin's foul-mouthed, misanthropic lesbian is about as far from Mary Berry as you can get. Still, there's something wonderfully sweet about *Grandma*, a tough-love grey-pound comedy that doesn't treat pensioners like old people – but still makes you feel like you need a big hug afterwards.

We meet ex-poet Elle (Tomlin) at her worst: still stinging from the death of her long-term life-partner but finding enough bile to dump her new girlfriend (Judy Greer) with a few cutting jokes. And then her 18-year-old granddaughter Sage (Julia Garner) shows up short of \$630 for an abortion... If Elle hadn't cut up her credit cards to make a wind chime, it might not be a problem, but her own empty bank account prompts the duo to embark on a road trip to try and scrounge the cash from old flames and angry exes.

Director Paul Weitz (*American Pie*, *About A Boy*) wrote the film especially for Tomlin after she stole Tina Fey's best scenes in his 2013 romcom *Admission*. Riding around in her own '55 Dodge, riffing on her cranky hippy act in Netflix's *Grace And*

Frankie, Tomlin absolutely owns *Grandma* through and through.

It might be a tough act to compete with, but everyone tries. Taking the front passenger seat, Garner shines as the naïve, knocked-up teen (getting a forked-tongue lashing from Elle when she confuses *The Feminine Mystique* with one of the X-Men). Meanwhile, Marcia Gay Harden bulldozes as the mother in the middle and Sam Elliot gets some of his most animated scenes in years as Elle's ex-husband.

Playing her first leading role in almost 30 years, Tomlin relishes every moment. She handles both the hard-won emotion and lacerating one-liners with more than enough nuance to earn a place on every Best Actress prediction list going. **Paul Bradshaw**

THE VERDICT Lily Tomlin makes a welcome comeback in a heartfelt, ballsy comedy with a full set of teeth. Consistently funny and genuinely moving, it brings out the best (and maybe the worst) in everyone involved.

► **Certificate 15** Director Paul Weitz Starring Lily Tomlin, Julia Garner, Marcia Gay Harden, Judy Greer, Laverne Cox **Screenplay** Paul Weitz **Distributor** Sony **Running time** 79 mins



A SICILIAN DREAM

★★★★☆ Out now

PHILIP WALSH'S DOCUDRAMA TAKES viewers on a trip around Sicily, examining the history of the now-discontinued Targa Florio road race. En route, it hits on a winning combo: Italian landscapes, old-school motorsport, Enzo Ferrari anecdotes. The whole enterprise has an enjoyably Mediterranean, lazy-Sunday-night feel, which is sadly also the chief problem. The am-dram reconstructions and presence of Italian TV don Francesco Da Mosto means everything feels very small screen: why fork out for a cinema ticket when this will inevitably be coming to BBC4 for you to doze off to after a roast? **Andrew Lowry**

► **Certificate** PG **Running time** 72 mins



TRUE ROMANCE

★★★★★ Out 20 November

SPEARHEADING THE BF1's LOVE season, Tony Scott's ebullient lovers-on-the-lam thriller is now a hard-to-believe 22 years old. Penned by Tarantino, it still feels box-fresh, for all its unashamed nods to Terrence Malick's *Badlands*. Red-hot at the core are Christian Slater and Patricia Arquette, as the geek and the hooker on the run after he steals her pimp's stash. With Brad Pitt pulling bongs, Gary Oldman in dreads, and Christopher Walken and Dennis Hopper unforgettable, the result is a pure cinematic sugar rush. **James Mottram**

► **Certificate** 18 **Running time** 116 mins



THE FORBIDDEN ROOM

★★★★☆ Out 11 December

AFTER AN OPENING LECTURE ON bathing, maverick director Guy Maddin's latest head trip dives into a maelstrom of giddy silent-era visions. An off-shoot of his *Seances* project – legendary 'lost' films re-imagined – the result unfurls like faded film stock's wayward ghost, its florid images and cheeky intertitles mixing sinking subs, bladder-slappers, butt-pinchers, banana vampires, sentient volcanoes... Follow the lava-like flow and slippery themes (memory, manhood, desire's absurdity) emerge, given feverish allure by the delirious visuals and hysterical humour. Luxuriate in it like a steamy bath. **Kevin Harley**

► **Certificate** TBC **Running time** 119 mins



ICE AND THE SKY

★★★★☆ Out 11 December

THERE'S SOMETHING A BIT STEVE ZISSOU about Claude Lorius. Maybe it's the way the French glaciologist is filmed in 1956, sitting on a desolate Antarctic rock in a woolly jumper, casually trying to offer a cigarette to a penguin. Credited with bringing global warming to worldwide attention, the eccentric eco-explorer is now an old man, capturing the attention of documentary director Luc Jacquet (*March Of The Penguins*). Taking Lorius' own incredible expedition footage and giving it a whimsical bent and a voiceover, Jacquet shapes a powerful portrait of the world and its soothsayer. **Paul Bradshaw**

► **Certificate** TBC **Running time** 89 mins


LOVE

★★★★★ Out 20 November

A **HARDCORE** 3D SEX FILM FROM the director of *Irréversible*? The mind boggles. And from threesomes to fetish clubs, Gaspar Noé doesn't hold back. Yet this American-in-Paris story, in which Karl Glusman's film student pings between two women (Klara Kristin, Aomi Muyock) is surprisingly tender. The cast is hit and miss, particularly Glusman (though full marks for his ability to 'perform' in other ways). But Noé still stimulates, not least in cutting one scene to *Assault On Precinct 13*'s theme. And the 3D? You've been poked in the eye before, but never like this. **James Mottram**

› Certificate 18 Running time 135 mins


ANGELS VS BULLIES

★★★★★ Out now

MOST QUASI-AMATEUR PRODUCTIONS struggle to make a mark in today's multiplex culture – but there's enough gusto and bonkers energy to this, combined with an admirable anti-bullying message, to warrant attention. On paper, the story sounds nuts – rogue teen teams up with ghosts to combat school bullies – but in the heightened drama of teenage life, extravaganzas like these do make a bizarre sort of sense. While the acting can be patchy, writer/director Christopher Turner stretches a clearly limited budget in a way that requires real talent – this is more than a glorified home movie. **Andrew Lowry**

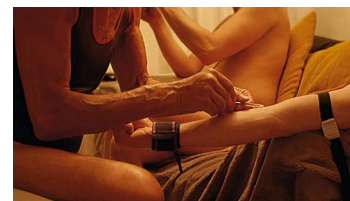
› Certificate 12A Running Time 81 mins


UNBRANDED

★★★★★ Out 27 November

"AIN'T NOTHING BETTER THAN RIDIN' a fine horse through a new country," reads the opening scrawl to Phillip Baribeau's frontier doc. Fine horses, new country and plenty of ridin' is exactly what you get for two hours as Texas horseman Ben Masters and his buddies adopt a herd of wild mustangs and ride them 3,000 miles from the Mexican border to the Canadian Rockies – all to raise awareness for the animal's plight in government corrals. The big-sky vistas are all incredible, but with the boys mostly just farting around the campfire, it's a bit like watching a beautiful western full of boring cowboys. **Paul Bradshaw**

› Certificate TBC Running Time 105 mins


CHEMSEX

★★★★★ Out 4 December

THEY CALL IT 'SLAMMING' – THE SLANG name for injecting GHB, mephedrone or crystal meth, particularly during sex parties; and among the UK's gay community it's become something of a high-risk epidemic. (And that's before we get into the practice of deliberate HIV self-infection.) In this excellent, timely and harrowing exposé, former and current drug addicts bravely bare their souls (and plenty else besides), while health professionals describe how new drugs, new tech, and a lonely, alienated community emerging from a traumatic past have all contributed to form this "perfect storm". **Ali Catterall**

› Certificate 18 Running time 83 mins



The world interspecies screaming championships got off to a fine start.

Scouts Guide To The Zombie Apocalypse

★★★★★ Out now Nip, nip, nip, nob, nob, nob...

COCKNEYS, WEREWOLVES, strippers... the list of minority groups we've seen the undead pitted against is ever-lengthening, but the results have been so mixed even the most cynical executives might have considered calling time before they reached *Zombies Vs Scouts*. Not so. Christopher Landon's (*Paranormal Activity: The Marked Ones*) horror-comedy has plenty of zip and a likeable lead in one-to-watch Tye Sheridan (*The Tree Of Life*, *X-Men: Apocalypse*) but it's all been done before – except the filthy bits. And perhaps they shouldn't have been done at all.

Sheridan plays Ben, one of a trio of best friends, whose interest in boy-scouting begins to wane as lady-scouting becomes more of a pressing concern. "Junior year is when all the girls become sluts," reasons wingman Carter (Logan Miller) who wants to party instead of accompanying super-keen Augie (Joey Morgan) on a camp-out with super-camp scout leader Rogers (*Anchorman*'s David Koechner, always good value). But when Ben and Carter sneak off, a zombie outbreak forces them to try and save the town with the help of Denise (Sarah Dumont)

a stripper with a – yep – heart of gold.

Playing like a very late-franchise *American Pie*, *Scouts* has its funny moments – most notably an out-of-the-blue Britney Spears rendition and an unexpected penile encounter – but it's largely arse gags, CG gore, and bros-before-hoes creepiness. Ben gapes at one of Denise's colleagues for *ages* before he realises she's dead meat, there's a mean, strangely out-of-place cunnilingus scene, and Carter gropes a zombie's breasts, reasoning: "I just wanted to see some titties!"

It feels like three different films: one sleazy, one sweet, one mildly amusing. Perhaps Carter's line, "It was fun when we were kids but we have to grow up, man!" should serve as the last word. Or a warning. **Matt Glasby**

THE VERDICT Passes the time without really passing muster, but it can't compete with *Shaun Of The Dead* or *Zombieland*, and probably shouldn't have tried.

› Certificate 15 Director Christopher Landon Starring Tye Sheridan, Logan Miller, Joey Morgan, Sarah Dumont, David Koechner Screenplay Erni Mochizuki, Carrie Lee Wilson, Christopher Landon, Lona Williams Distributor Substance Running time 93 mins



SPECTRE

★★★★★

Out now

Once upon a time in Mexico, Italy, Austria...

F

FROM THE GUN-barrel opening to the gadgets in Q's workshop, everything is back where it belongs in *SPECTRE*, an everything or nothing, kitchen-sink Bond that goes to epic lengths to deliver all you could conceivably want from this invincible and indefatigable franchise. Buoyed and emboldened by the worldwide success of *Skyfall*, the tireless Sam Mendes and the fearless Daniel Craig go hell for leather in a film that practically fizzes with brio, even at points when its circuitous plot comes perilously close to unravelling. If, as many suspect, it will be the last

Bond for both of them, they can at least depart confident they have left it all on the field and are leaving the series stronger than they found it.

Mendes sets his stall out early on with a stunning *Touch Of Evil*-style tracking shot that begins high above the heads of a gargantuan Mexico City Day Of The Dead parade before zeroing in on a skull-masked 007. Weaving in and out of the legions of ghoulishly made-up revellers, incoming DoP Hoyte Van Hoytema follows Craig up stairs, down hallways and out on a ledge in a sequence so fluid you can barely spot the joins. Then the fun really starts: a deluge of falling masonry sends Bond and his quarry back onto the streets and

into the air in a loop-the-looping chopper. As pre-titles sequences go, it's the equal of any that has gone before it – and that includes the iconic ski-jump gotcha from *The Spy Who Loved Me*.

Live and let drive

Back in London, Bond's rogue mission has set the cat among the pigeons. M's MI6 is at risk of being subsumed by an umbrella outfit run by the oily C (Andrew Scott) and can ill afford to let its chief assassin go AWOL. Bond, however, has other ideas, not to mention a Tolkien-esque ring whose octopus engraving points to some seriously sinister shenanigans. So off to Rome he pops, there to seduce a widow (Monica



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

DR. NO 1962
Bond begins... and so, in fact, does SPECTRE itself (represented by the titular loon).

FAIR GAME 2010

Jez Butterworth and his brother John-Henry tackle genuine spies in this CIA drama.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE – GHOST PROTOCOL 2011

Léa Seydoux gives Tom Cruise a run for his money in the best of his IMF adventures.

For full reviews of these films visit totalfilm.com/reviews

‘Goes to epic lengths to deliver all you could want from the franchise’

to train-based fisticuffs straight out of *From Russia With Love*, an explosive desert confrontation, and a denouement involving a familiar place in unfamiliar shape.

In-danger mouse

OK, so sparks don't exactly fly between Craig and eventual leading lady Léa Seydoux – or, for that matter, between Craig and Christoph Waltz, disarmingly bland as an overly genteel adversary whose primary beef, once revealed, verges on the petulant. (It does lead to a doozy of a torture scene, though.) Dovetailing *SPECTRE*'s plot with those of Craig's previous Bonds is a dubious move, while the edifice that houses Scott's Centre of National Security resembles nothing so much as Stark Tower.

Marvel's influence is felt elsewhere too: a plan to combine the world's intelligence capabilities into one all-seeing, all-knowing supersnoop bears striking similarities to *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*. Only Bautista makes the crossover unscathed, this Guardian Of The Galaxy projecting the kind of brutish physical threat that – like the Rolls Royce Phantom that pops up in one scene – brings back happy memories of *Goldfinger*'s Oddjob.

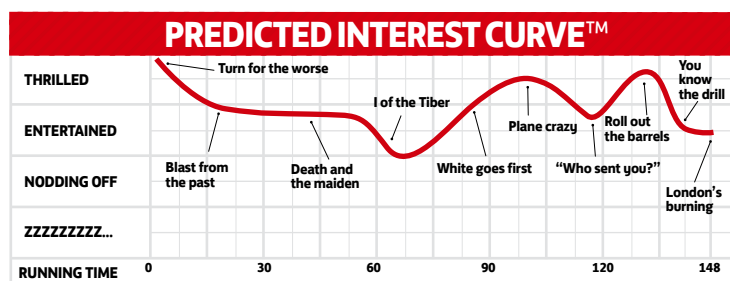
Craig, for his part, tempers his steely determination with a welcome lightness of touch (a scene in which he interrogates a mouse would have been unimaginable back in the doleful days of *Quantum*), while Ralph Fiennes' M has some ace bants with Scott over their respective code names. The real delight, though, is Ben Whishaw, whose donnish Q is given much more to do this time around and inflects his scenes with a deliciously offbeat energy. If this does turn out to be Craig's last Bond, let's hope it isn't Wishaw's too. **Neil Smith**

THE VERDICT Though not as emotionally compelling as *Skylfall*, this still ranks as a sleek, pulse-pounding if slightly overlong entertainment that should have little trouble emulating its predecessor's box office.

► **Certificate 12A** **Director** Sam Mendes **Starring** Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz, Léa Seydoux, Monica Bellucci, Ralph Fiennes, Andrew Scott **Screenplay** Jez Butterworth, John Logan, Neal Purvis, Robert Wade **Distributor** Sony **Running time** 148 mins

Bellucci, age-appropriate yet criminally underused) with information to impart on a certain acronymic syndicate...

Mendes' film is at its most atmospheric here – a clandestine gathering of *SPECTRE* bigwigs in a gothic Roman palazzo exudes all the brooding menace of an *Eyes Wide Shut* sex orgy. Oddly, though, the nocturnal car chase that follows fails to stir the blood, hampered by an incongruously jaunty tone and the sneaking suspicion that, even with man-mountain Dave Bautista at the wheel of the Jaguar chasing Craig's Aston Martin along Rome's cobbled thoroughfares, there isn't much at stake.



Things quickly improve when the action moves to Austria, where Bond has a chilly encounter with old adversary Mr White (Jesper Christensen, making good on the promise of his all-too fleeting cameos in *Casino Royale* and *Quantum Of Solace*). From this point on there's nary a let-up. A scrap on the slopes involving one wingless plane and three 4x4s leads seamlessly



Because you never know what weather to expect in the desert.

The Dressmaker

★★★★☆ Out 20 November The stitch is back...

THIS IS VERY WRONG," SAYS ONE character when confronted with violence. "Yes, but I'm unstable," comes the reply. Both statements apply to this Kate Winslet-starring adaptation of Rosalie Ham's novel. Part outlandish Oz-com cut from the same cloth as '90s hits *Muriel's Wedding* and *My Best Friend's Wedding* (P.J. Hogan directed those and wrote this screenplay), part mystery-thriller and part spaghetti western, its tone hops about like a 'roo dancing on a barbie.

Returning to her rural town of Dungatar, Myrtle 'Tilly' Dunnage (Winslet) shacks up with her cantankerous ma, 'Mad Molly' (Judy Davis, excellent), and stares down the contempt of the townsfolk – she was banished, aged 10, for killing a playmate. Now a glamorous, worldly woman whose titular profession ensures that she's forever enshrined in breath-snatching outfits, Tilly is hellbent on clearing her name and getting revenge while she's at it. And that's just the half of it. There's also a romantic subplot with local lad Teddy McSwiney (a gently smouldering Liam Hemsworth), a crimson wave of grand guignol killings, and a cross-dressing police sergeant (Hugo Weaving). Fair to say that's a lot to stitch together for

Jocelyn Moorhouse (*How To Make An American Quilt*), making her first film in 18 years.

Many, for sure, will call *The Dressmaker* 'uneven' or 'patchy' and even 'a mess', but all of this genre-hopping and switching between sincerity and artifice lends it a pleasing energy. Winslet gives it both barrels as a femme fatale whose actions are buoyed by a score that blends Ennio Morricone-flavoured thrills and Philip Glass-tinged emotionality, while the town's ladyfolk floating through their spit-and-sawdust environ in dazzling haute couture is a gloriously surreal sight.

Half an hour too long given its exhausting content, *The Dressmaker* is nonetheless an intriguing, fun oddity that highlights the absurdities and extremities of human behaviour. **Jamie Graham**

THE VERDICT A female story grafted onto the traditionally male sub-genre of the spaghetti western, it's by turns earnest and camp, violent and tender. And it kind of works.

► **Certificate** TBC **Director** Jocelyn Moorhouse
Starring Kate Winslet, Judy Davis, Liam Hemsworth, Hugo Weaving, Sarah Snook **Screenplay** P.J. Hogan
Distributor Entertainment **Running time** 118 mins



REVENGE OF THE MEKONS

★★★★☆ Out now

"THE MOST REVOLUTIONARY GROUP in the history of rock 'n' roll"? Whether or not you agree with the late Lester Bangs' assessment, there's no denying that cult favourites The Mekons, the longest-running of the original UK punk outfits, are a gift to any doc-maker. Joe Angio's jubilant film charts their gloriously shambolic and endlessly inventive journey from art-school collective to illustrious godfathers of alt-country (not bad going for a bunch hailing from Leeds). For those yet unfamiliar with their beautiful racket, this might just make them your new favourite band. **Ali Catterall**

► **Certificate** 15 **Running time** 95 mins



A CHRISTMAS STAR

★★★★☆ Out now

BOTH PIERCE BROSNAN AND LIAM NEESON appear in small roles, but there's little else here to elevate this Irish Christmas movie above the usual made-for-TV schmalz. Born with a magical power to spread feelings of goodwill, young Noelle (Erin Galway-Kendrick) has to convince her parents and the local townsfolk that evil douche Pat McKerrod (*Downton Abbey*'s Rob James-Collier) has nefarious reasons for buying the local factory where they all work. There's a degree of charm, but it will be a Christmas miracle if anyone remembers this film a week after watching. **Matt Looker**

► **Certificate** U **Running time** 80 mins



DOCTOR ZHIVAGO

★★★★☆ Out 27 November

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION PROVES a mighty inconvenience to Omar Sharif and Julie Christie in David Lean's sumptuous 1965 adaptation of Boris Pasternak's novel, a slow-burning history lesson whose moments of high spectacle are juxtaposed with a timeless, if sudsy, tale of doomed amour. Sharif, patently miscast, almost had a breakdown during a two-year shoot that nearly killed one of his castmates. No matter: like *Lawrence Of Arabia* before it, this is cinema on a monumental scale that should be seen on the biggest screen available. **Neil Smith**

► **Certificate** PG **Running time** 188 mins

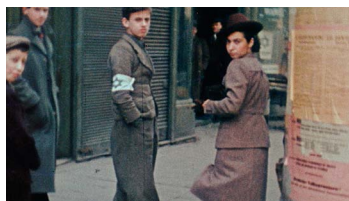


HECTOR

★★★★☆ Out 11 December

WRITER/DIRECTOR JAKE GAVIN MAKES an auspicious debut with this sensitive study of a homeless man making his annual pilgrimage from Scotland to a London shelter for Christmas. Played by Peter Mullan with both strength of character and world-weary vulnerability, Hector meets prejudice, good Samaritans and opportunistic bullies along the way, making for a realistic depiction of life on the road for someone used to life on the streets. The film unravels the circumstances of Hector's downfall as he tries to reconnect with old family; the result is intimate and quietly powerful. **Matt Looker**

► **Certificate** 15 **Running time** 87 mins



MY NAZI LEGACY

★★★★★ Out 20 November

HISTORICAL DENIAL RUNS DEEP IN David Evans' doc about sons of Nazi war criminals, which begins rigorously but evolves into something gutting. Human rights lawyer Philippe Sands takes a thorough approach to interviewing Niklas Frank and Horst von Wächter, children of high-ranking Nazi fathers. Frank hates his father, "a complete Nazi"; more worryingly, von Wächter refuses to accept his father's guilt. A stand-off between the two grows more fraught as Sands' family scars emerge and his reserve slips, reminding us why the past should never be forgotten – much less denied. **Kevin Harley**

› Certificate PG Running time 92 mins



THE HONOURABLE REBEL

★★★★★ Out 4 December

MIXING ARCHIVE FOOTAGE, TALKING heads, fictional dramatisations and a first-person voiceover, this sort-of docudrama inventively tells the story of Elizabeth Montagu, from her aristocratic upbringing to her involvement in World War II. Is her story really worthy enough, though? Her problems certainly feel trivial when juxtaposed with a tense opening scene depicting a Jewish man trying to avoid detection from a Nazi officer. Things do pick up when she finds herself behind enemy lines in occupied France – only to tail away again when the war ends and the story moves on to her later life. **Stephen Puddicombe**

› Certificate PG Running Time 97 mins



HAND GESTURES

★★★★★ Out 20 November

PROOF THEY DO INDEED MAKE 'EM like they used to comes in this spare, virtually wordless look at the work of the Fonderia Artistica Battaglia, a 100-year-old Milanese foundry that still uses the same methods to create bronze sculptures as were used 600 years before Christ. Francesco Clerici's absorbing documentary catches its craftsmen at work on a dog facsimile by the artist Velasco Vitali, recording its journey from wax cast to finished article in a way that celebrates both ancient tradition and hard graft. Heavy, ahem, metal fans apart though, you do wonder exactly whom it's aimed at. **Neil Smith**

› Certificate U Running Time 77 mins



THE SHOW OF SHOWS

★★★★★ Out 4 December

PRESENTED AS ONE LONG SERIES of silent clips from the archives, this documentary presents footage of circus performances and cabaret throughout the ages, all set to a stirring score composed in part by Georg Holm and Orri Páll Dýrason of Sigur Rós. The display of vintage circus showmanship is charming enough and the feats on display captivate for a time, but the conveyor-belt format is a test for any attention span, especially as it lacks any real insight into its subject matter. At the very least, you'll be wishing that Harry Hill was narrating each potential mishap. **Matt Looker**

› Certificate TBC Running time 73 mins



When Harry Met Sally...

★★★★★ Out 11 December Here she comes again...

ASSUMING SUCH PEOPLE EXIST, even those who've never seen Rob Reiner's 1989 romcom benchmark know this is the one with the fake orgasm and the Woody Allen fixation. And those people are right, to a point.

But there's more to the brief-turning-long encounters between Billy Crystal's horny Harry Burns and Meg Ryan's sensitive Sally than this reputation suggests. Sure, Allen-isms linger in the titles, in the jazzy music, the *Casablanca* references, the New York fetish and the study of romantic mores. But when Harry meets Sally on a cross-country trek in 1977, she mocks his belief that an obsession with death makes him deep... and a lighter, brighter version of Allen's playfield unfolds.

The ending is a shoo-in but it's none the worse for it when the path there is plotted with charm, nuance and Nora Ephron's crisp, compressed scripting. The talking-point claim that men and women can't actually be friends (because: sex) seems well-worn now, but it hardly matters because Harry/Sally's positions shift subtly over their years-on meetings. Thirty-something melancholy creeps in, judiciously eased by the way they gradually

grow into each other, turning into the lifers in the talking-heads interludes.

Despite their chalk/cheese coupling, Crystal and Ryan manage to make us believe (and care) that they do, helped by the docu-like way of framing the film's vignettes with life in motion around them: the ball-game bit is a keeper, while Bruno Kirby and Carrie Fisher are convincing as our leads' lived-in friends.

Ephron's influence itself is now well lived-in on film and TV, from suds-coms (*Friends*) to gently lewd, playfully predictable on/off/on romances (Richard Curtis, *Bridget Jones...*). But her breezy sweetener hasn't aged much and the copycats prove it has distinction. Basically, the Allen copycat spawned its own litter. We'll still have what she's having. **Kevin Harley**

THE VERDICT It's about old friends... Sweet, sparky, mildly saucy, Ephron and Reiner's romcom holds up down the years. The script zings, the leads sing: Crystal and Ryan were never better.

› Certificate 15 Director Rob Reiner Starring Billy Crystal, Meg Ryan, Carrie Fisher, Bruno Kirby Screenplay Nora Ephron Distributor Park Circus Running time 92 mins



Even models have to do the washing up.

Sunset Song

★★★★★ Out 4 December

Aberdeen Agyness.

THE PAST IS A FOREIGN country, and rarely more so than when it's deep rural Aberdeenshire in the years before World War I. Chris Guthrie (Agyness Deyn), growing up on a remote croft under the fierce eye of her patriarch-bearded father (Peter Mullan), dreams of a wider world but remains tied to the land where she was born. Terence Davies, working to his own script, lovingly adapts the classic 1932 Scots novel by Lewis Grassie Gibbon into a film that moves with the rhythm of the seasons. Fans of fast-paced action may be put off, but for those who can adjust to the rumination pace of *Sunset Song*, there are riches in store.

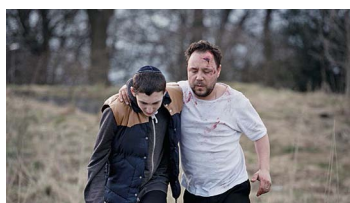
After her eye-catching turn in *Electricity*, model-turned-actress Deyn here finds a role ideally suited to her wide-eyed expressive features and pre-Raphaelite beauty. As Chris, growing into womanhood, becoming ever more conscious of her independence and sensuality, she gives a deeply felt performance, well matched by Mullan as her brutal dad. (Oppressive fathers have long haunted Davies' work, linking back to his early autobiographical films like *Distant Voices*, *Still Lives*.) Michael McDonough's camera pans lovingly across

the glorious Highland landscapes (much of them, admittedly, shot in New Zealand) as the action sweeps over the years and the shadow of war reaches out to darken and destroy the lives of this small community.

It's not all poignancy. There are moments of humour and whole scenes of celebration – not least Chris's wedding, her barn spruced up for feasting, music and dance. And for all the visual grandeur this is a film of touching intimacy, the sense of one life experiencing joy and hardship and surviving it all. Only towards the end does the film start to stumble, with an ill-advised transition to the mud and desolation of the trenches that breaks the integrity of the action. But that apart, Davies' long-nurtured plan to film Gibbon's novel has come to rich fruition. **Philip Kemp**

THE VERDICT A warm, intimate epic of Scots rural life from Terence Davies, filmed with palpable affection and framing a central performance of emotional intensity.

► **Certificate 15** Director Terence Davies Starring Agyness Deyn, Peter Mullan, Kevin Guthrie, Jack Greenlees, Ian Pirie Screenplay Terence Davies Distributor Metrodome Running time 130 mins



ORTHODOX

★★★★★ Out now

DAVID LEON'S TALE OF A KOSHER butcher who turns to crime to make ends meet started out as a half-hour short before being expanded to feature length. That's perhaps why his drama feels both over-extended and underpowered, for all the brooding intensity Stephen Graham brings to the troubled central role. Scenes involving arson, loan sharking and bare-knuckle boxing seem dreadfully clichéd, even when set against Graham's faith-based struggles. The result is a film just as conflicted as its hero, its thoughts on Judaism at odds throughout with all the conventional gangster business. **Neil Smith**

► **Certificate TBC** Running time 93 mins



THE LESSON

★★★★★ Out 4 December

UNFOLDING IN CONTEMPORARY provincial Bulgaria, this impressively controlled debut feature from writer/directors Kristina Grozeva and Petar Valchanov focuses on 30-something female English teacher and translator Nadezhda (Margita Gosheva). Discovering that her marital home is to be repossessed in just three days, she is driven to extreme measures in her efforts to come up with the necessary money. *The Lesson* owes a thing or two to the Dardenne brothers' social-realist dramas, but thanks in part to Gosheva's terrific performance, it remains a gripping study of human principles. **Tom Dawson**

► **Certificate TBC** Running time 105 mins



MR CALZAGHE

★★★★★ Out 20 November

THERE'S NOTHING ESPECIALLY original about the way former boxing champ Joe Calzaghe's story is told in this dutiful documentary – talking heads (including Michael J Fox!) and TV footage are relied upon to trace his path from shy amateur through to retirement via the five key fights that defined his record-smashing career. But that barely matters when the sporting action is so thrilling. Calzaghe the boxer is a riveting presence in the ring; shame that the film never really gets that close to Calzaghe the person, leaving us wanting to know more about his relationship with dad/trainer Enzo. **Stephen Puddicombe**

► **Certificate 15** Running time 92 mins



GÜEROS

★★★★★ Out 20 November

THE EXUBERANT SPIRIT OF THE French New Wave animates this playful, freewheeling debut by Mexican writer/director Alonso Ruizpalacios. Set against the backdrop of the 1999 Mexico City students' strike, *Güeros* centres on two middle-class brothers – adolescent Tomas (Sebastian Aguirre) and slacker older sibling Fede (Tenoch Huerta) – who find themselves driving around the sprawling metropolis searching for a reclusive rock singer. Filled with digressions and tonal shifts, it reveals through its characters' experiences the tensions and contradictions within wider society. **Tom Dawson**

► **Certificate TBC** Running time 106 mins



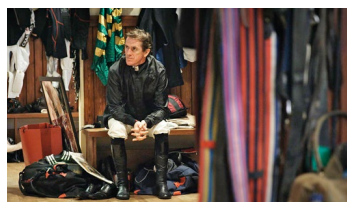
GRAZING THE SKY

★★★★★ Out 11 December

HORACIO ALCALÁ'S DOCUMENTARY follows eight different circus performers, detailing the tenacity, commitment and significant sacrifices required to be part of a profession where one slip can mean debilitating or even fatal injury (as was the case when acrobat Sarah Guyard-Guillot died during a Cirque Du Soleil show in Las Vegas in 2013). Alcalá elegantly records his subjects as they spin, flip and dangle and takes them back to their homelands to see what drives them. His uncritical stance, alas, gives *Grazing The Sky* all the objectivity of a corporate video.

Neil Smith

› Certificate U Running time 88 mins

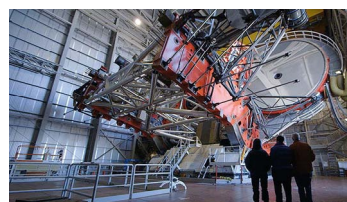


BEING AP

★★★★★ Out 23 November

MOST SPORTS DOCUMENTARIES focus on their subject's rise to greatness, but, as Anthony Wonke's film on award-winning jockey A.P. McCoy proves, a more interesting portrait can be drawn at the end rather than the peak of a career. In the jockey's own words, it's the moment he becomes a "has-been", and it's as saddening as it is fascinating to watch this meticulous, driven star having to confront a future lacking the thing he loves. Wonke obtains intimate access – not least scenes of marital tension – although close-ups of McCoy's weathered face tell their own story. **Stephen Puddicombe**

› Certificate 12A Running time 101 mins



STAR*MEN

★★★★★ Out 20 November

AN ENGROSSING LOOK AT HARDY friendships and Big Science, this low-key but deep-thinking doc catches a ride with the 50-year-reunion California road trip of four elderly British astronomers, whose discoveries in the USA revolutionised their field. Getting both the long view (stunning night sky footage) and the close one (the quartet bickering about life, the universe and everything), the film explains complex theories with elegance and economy. Packed with heart-in-mouth wilderness quests, while posing chewy questions about God and death to the visionary Professor Nick Woolf, it's a quiet delight. **Kate Stables**

› Certificate PG Running time 88 mins



MY SKINNY SISTER

★★★★★ Out 27 November

TSANNA LENKEN'S OWN HISTORY OF eating disorders informs the Swedish director's debut feature, about young misfit Stella (Rebecka Josephson, endearing) who discovers her glamorous older sibling (Amy Deasismont) is secretly battling anorexia. Torn between breaking a confidence and a potentially life-saving betrayal, Stella finds herself in an impossible situation that generates considerable tension and poignancy... Until the grown-ups – and histrionic melodrama – get involved. For the most part, though, this is a touching exploration of a thorny subject and the lies we tell the people we love. **Neil Smith**

› Certificate 15 Running time 95 mins



Paranormal Activity: The Ghost Dimension

★★★★★ Out now Spooks: the less-than-good.

AFTER A COUPLE OF YEARS OF delays, the long-awaited/dreaded (depending on your tolerance for long-running budget-horror sagas) sixth entry in the trend-setting *Paranormal Activity* franchise is finally here. Was it worth the wait? Categorically not. Even die-hard fans are likely to be disappointed by this lazy rehash.

This time we meet yet another new family moving home, comprising a bland father (Chris J. Murray), an even blander mother (Emily Fleege) and the inevitable creepy young daughter (Ivy George's Leila). After a few hopeless early stabs at characterisation – in which our protagonists make countless, distractingly illogical decisions – it's time for spooky goings-on to unsettle the household. The family discover a dusty old box full of home videotapes of all the creepy kids we've come to know in the previous films. Soon enough, they're seeing a connection between the footage and Leila's strange behaviour.

The dialogue is exposition-driven almost to the point of parody, while the sluggish unfolding of the story's mysteries rids the film of any suspense. For casual cinemagoers

looking for a decent, straightforward fright flick, this is all likely to be mind-numbingly dull. Conversely, for *Paranormal Activity* devotees, there aren't nearly enough answers to satisfy their desire to learn more about the demonic mythology that's been teased and drip-fed for more than half a decade.

Of course, none of this would matter as much if the film were in the slightest bit scary. But depressingly it relies entirely on banal jump-scares that function only to startle you out of nodding off. A higher budget means more special effects – most of which involve an unthreatening cloud of black dust floating around the house that feels like a laughable attempt to justify the film's 3D release.

Stephen Puddicombe

THE VERDICT The supposedly final bout of *Activity* finds the once-innovative – and bloody scary, at that – franchise all out of ideas.

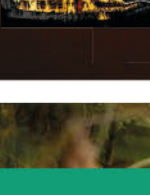
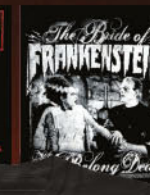
› Certificate 15 Director Gregory Plotkin Starring Chris J. Murray, Emily Fleege, Ivy George, Dan Gill Screenplay Jason Pagan, Andrew Deutschman, Adam Robitel, Gavin Heffernan Distributor Paramount Running time 88 mins

MASTODON



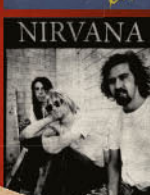
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Vin's sword didn't meet EU safety standards.

The Last Witch Hunter

★★★★★ Out now Nothing but hag, hag, hag...

VIN DIESEL MAKES HIS FIRST foray into fantasy filmmaking with *The Last Witch Hunter*, a movie spawned from his love of tabletop role-playing game *Dungeons & Dragons*. Given the end result, you rather wish Diesel had been into *Monopoly*, *Cluedo* or *Snakes & Ladders* – surely these board game staples would've provided a better basis for a film.

Directed by Breck Eisner, who last pitched up with the 2010 remake of George Romero's *The Crazies*, *The Last Witch Hunter* is a perfunctory scare-fest drowning in digital effects but entirely lacking in charisma. Co-scripted by a trio of writers – two of whom penned last year's equally toothless *Dracula Untold* – it topline Diesel as Kaulder, a medieval warrior cursed with immortality just as he vanquishes the pestilence-spreading Witch Queen.

One credit sequence – and 800 years – later, we're in modern-day New York. Kaulder, who previously looked like he took his hair-care tips from *Lord Of The Rings'* Gimli, is now bald, buff and spends his spare time seducing air hostesses. He's also employed by a witch council to hunt down naughty necromancers who practise dark magic (to a seemingly oblivious public).

When Kaulder's priest advisor (Michael Caine) is left spell-stricken, he follows a trail that eventually suggests a ploy to resurrect the Witch Queen. Along for the ride is Caine's well-meaning replacement (Elijah Wood) and a good witch named Chloë (*Game Of Thrones'* Rose Leslie), who spends her days running a dark arts club that wouldn't look out of place at a Cure concert.

As the story plods along, Eisner fills the screen with icky visuals, but they rarely get under the skin. Some ideas are promising, like a bakery feeding its patrons with maggot-riddled cakes, but never really developed. While the dialogue proves as wooden as a box of crucifixes, the performances, bar a lively turn from *This Is England's* Joseph Gilgun, are largely moribund. Let us pray this is a one-off. **James Mottram**

THE VERDICT This pixel-afflicted horror-fantasy never gets near to fulfilling its potential. Even hardcore Diesel addicts will be hard-pressed to hunt out any enjoyment.

► **Certificate** 12A **Director** Breck Eisner **Starring** Vin Diesel, Rose Leslie, Elijah Wood, Michael Caine **Screenplay** Cory Goodman, Matt Sazama, Burk Sharpless **Distributor** eOne **Running Time** 106 mins



RADIATOR

★★★★★ Out 27 November

THE EVERYDAY TRIALS OF CARING FOR ageing relatives are unstintingly laid bare in Tom Browne's understated yet richly poignant drama, a homegrown *Amour* that incidentally lists Barbara Broccoli and Rachel Weisz among its executive producers. Richard Johnson (who died earlier this year) dominates as a geriatric terror determined not to make it easy for his ailing wife (Gemma Jones) and the adult son (Daniel Cerqueira) who has guiltily come to tend to him. But the true star of this quietly affecting chamber piece is its cottage setting: a cluttered Cumbrian warren in which the director's own late parents lived. **Neil Smith**

► **Certificate** TBC **Running time** 193 mins



MOMENTUM

★★★★★ Out 20 November

AN IMPLAUSIBLY HI-TECH DIAMOND heist kicks off this otherwise run-of-the-mill action thriller. One-time Bond girl Olga Kurylenko plays a mysterious thief forced to fend off assassin James Purefoy, who's acting on behalf of Morgan Freeman's corrupt senator. With cat and mouse circling each other far too often and for far too long, the film doesn't exactly live up to its name, but Kurylenko is clearly invested, and Purefoy has fun hamming it up as a super-smooth baddie. Freeman, however, quite literally phones in his handful of scenes, making it perfectly unclear what's actually at stake here. **Matt Looker**

► **Certificate** 15 **Running time** 94 mins

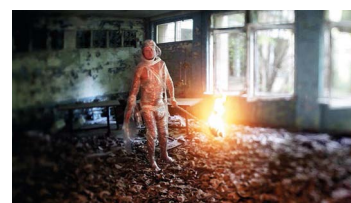


STEVE MCQUEEN: THE MAN & LE MANS

★★★★★ Out 20 November

FILMED ON LOCATION IN FRANCE during the summer of 1970, *Le Mans* was the dream project of its star and producer Steve McQueen. Drawing on hitherto unseen footage, interviews with its surviving participants, and private audio recordings of the late McQueen, this fascinating doc from co-directors John McKenna and Gabriel Clarke pieces together why the shoot went so wrong. A paranoid, obsessive McQueen emerges as an Icarus-style figure here, suffering the humiliation of losing creative control over the ill-fated production and the collapse of his marriage. **Tom Dawson**

► **Certificate** 15 **Running time** 102 mins



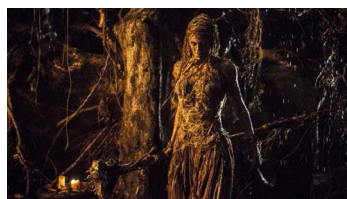
THE RUSSIAN WOODPECKER

★★★★★ Out 20 November

APRIL 1986, THE NUCLEAR POWER station at Chernobyl in Ukraine went into meltdown – the worst nuclear disaster that's yet occurred. Nearly 30 years later, with Ukraine on the brink of revolution, Kiev theatre designer Fedor Alexandrovitch decides to find out what really happened. What he comes up with is an astounding tale of Soviet duplicity and official cover-up. Conspiracy theory? Maybe – but Chad Gracia's doc, which showcases Fedor's eccentric personality, rivets the attention, not least for all the interviews with elderly, tight-lipped apparatchiks. "Ukraine," we're told, "is full of ghosts." Indeed it is. **Philip Kemp**

► **Certificate** TBC **Running time** 80 mins

Box office charts 05.10.15 – 01.11.15



THE LAST WITCH HUNTER

Whether or not the mooted follow-up happens, a sequel to *Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters* is still apparently on the cards, so either way witches aren't safe. Also not safe: audiences.



PAN

A bit of – OK, a lot of – an underperformer, alas. Mind you, posters didn't exactly scream fun for all the family – the one on our bus made it look like *The Usual Suspects* doing panto.



HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 2

Sandler's best-received film in ages; mind you, *The Cobbler*/*Pixels*/*Blended* set the bar so low, 90 mins of Wayne The Werewolf wrestling with a nit comb would've equally done the trick.

UK TOP 10

POSITION	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT THERE
1	SPECTRE ★★★★★	£41.3m	£41.3m	1
2	Hotel Transylvania 2 ★★★	£16m	£16m	3
3	The Martian ★★★★★	£15.3m	£21.8m	5
4	Suffragette ★★★★★	£7.4m	£7.4m	3
5	Pan ★★	£7.2m	£7.2m	3
6	Sicario ★★★★★	£4.6m	£4.6m	4
7	Paranormal Activity: The Ghost Dimension ★	£3m	£3m	2
8	Legend ★★★★★	£2.8m	£18.2m	8
9	Crimson Peak ★★★	£2.3m	£2.3m	2
10	The Last Witch Hunter ★	£2.2m	£2.2m	2

US TOP 10

POSITION	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT THERE
1	The Martian ★★★★★	\$127.8m	\$182.8m	5
2	Hotel Transylvania 2 ★★★	\$65.5m	\$156m	6
3	Goosebumps N/A	\$57.1m	\$57.1	3
4	Bridge Of Spies ★★★★★	\$45.2m	\$45.2m	3
5	The Intern ★★★	\$32m	\$68.5m	6
6	Pan ★★	\$31.8m	\$31.8m	4
7	Crimson Peak ★★★	\$27.7m	\$27.7m	3
8	Sicario ★★★★★	\$26.9m	\$42m	7
9	The Last Witch Hunter ★	\$18.6m	\$18.6m	2
10	Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials ★★★	\$15.6m	\$78.8m	7



BRIDGE OF SPIES

Package this with other Spielberg/Hanks collabs – *Saving Private Ryan*, *Catch Me If You Can* – and you've got one hell of a boxset. Plus a bonus disc of bloopers called *The Terminal*.



SPECTRE

'The Writing's On The Wall' is the first Bond song to hit number one in the UK; Madonna's 'Die Another Day' only hit three, even though you remember it being a massive number two.

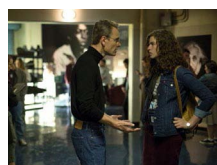


CRIMSON PEAK

Lots of critics saw the twists coming 'a mile off' in del Toro's spooker, but for our money it still came as a shock to see Hellboy slinking down the staircase in a diaphanous nightie.

Still out, still good...

Our pick of the movies out now



STEVE JOBS ★★★★★

"A fast and furious biopic, machine-gun written by Aaron Sorkin and directed with controlled gusto by Danny Boyle, who corrals a clutch of terrific performances; Michael Fassbender has never been better."



BROOKLYN ★★★★★

"Colm Toibin's award-winning novel is brought impeccably to the screen by director John Crowley and writer Nick Hornby, with Saoirse Ronan excelling herself in the lead. A film that works its way irresistibly into the emotions."



TANGERINE ★★★★★

"Though it was famously filmed on three iPhone 5s, Sean Baker's super-fresh and edgy street-life dramedy motors like a proper movie. Loving rather than lurid, it paints hookers, junkies and johns as people, not social problems."



Coming soon...

The big hitters on the cards for next issue...

Call off Christmas! There's just too much on at the pictures to bother with tangly fairy lights and whose go it is on the advent calendar. On one side of the big day, there's *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (17 Dec), Tina Fey and Amy Poehler in *Sisters* (18 Dec) and Snoopy and Charlie Brown in *The Peanuts Movie* (21 Dec).

And on the other side, there's Ferrell and Wahlberg in *Daddy's Home* (26 Dec) and *Moby Dick* origin story *In The Heart Of The Sea* (26 Dec). Then as 2016 dawns, there's a great rush of awards contenders: *The Danish Girl* (1 Jan), David O. Russell's *Joy* (1 Jan), QT's *The Hateful Eight* (8 Jan), *The Revenant*

(15 Jan) and *Room* (15 Jan). And who knows, maybe *Rocky* side-quel *Creed* (15 Jan) will see Sly called to the Oscar podium like it's 1977. Which brings us back to *Star Wars* – on the off-chance it does well, we'd like to pitch a spin-off about a pissed-off droid in the old west called 'The Hateful BB-8'.



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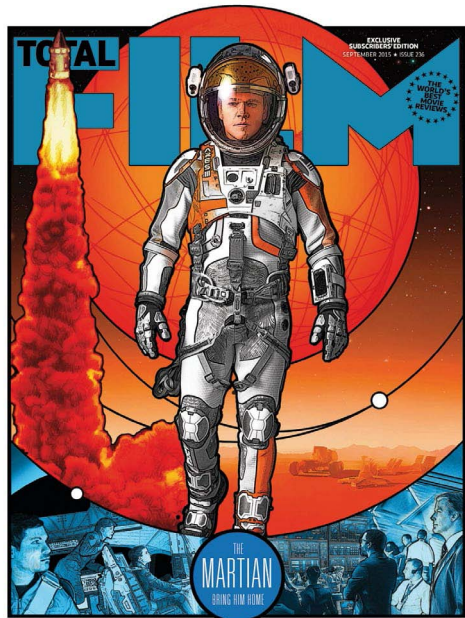
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MAKING OF



GUARDIAN OF THE GALAXY

AS **STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS** READIES ITS ASSAULT ON CINEMAS, TOTAL FILM FINDS OUT HOW J.J. ABRAMS IS CURATING THE MOST ANTICIPATED BLOCKBUSTER EVER TO ENSURE IT LIVES UP TO FAN EXPECTATIONS...

WORDS MATT MAYTUM





Blade trinity: Kylo Ren (Adam Driver) and his tri-pronged saber.

“WE ARE HERE ON DAY 1... OF STAR WARS: EPISODE VII. HOW INCREDIBLE IS THAT?” J.J. ABRAMS

16 May, 2014. Abu Dhabi. Sun, sand, extras and crew members as far as the eye can see, as J.J. Abrams presides over the first clack of the clapperboard for *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, the seventh official instalment in the canon. Incredible doesn't even begin to describe it.

The film's mere existence is incredible enough for fans who've felt like they've belonged in a galaxy far, far away ever since George Lucas unveiled *Star Wars* 38 years ago; it of course had a seismic impact on the future of cinema, and established an unprecedented 'expanded universe' that felt like it tangibly existed beyond the edges of just one film.

As the universe unfolded further with *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return Of The Jedi*, the mythology grew even more off-screen, through the merchandise, the tie-in books, and the fans' inexhaustible imaginations. So when Lucas decided to delve into the world again with a prequel trilogy, beginning with 1999's *The Phantom Menace*, expectations were sky high... only to be blown to smithereens like a Death

Star. The CGI-slick world failed to capture the imagination like the worn-in dustiness of the original trilogy; it was perhaps no surprise, then, that while promoting *Indiana Jones And The Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull* in 2008, Lucas told *Total Film* there would be no further *Star Wars* films. "I've left pretty explicit instructions for there not to be any more features," he said. "There will definitely be no Episodes VII-IX. That's because there isn't any story."

But when Disney purchased Lucasfilm for a cool \$4bn (and change), the film franchise was defibrillated, with plans announced for a new trilogy of 'Episodes', plus standalone spin-off films to plug the gaps in the years between each release. *Star Wars* was back in business. And while director J.J. Abrams seems like the perfect person to reinvigorate the series, having successfully brought *Star Trek* back to the big screen to the delight of Trekkies and non-fans alike, even he needed convincing, with Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy eventually winning him over with the tantalising question, "Who is Luke Skywalker?" Lucas' prequels, after all, were confined to the backstories of established characters, but Abrams was free to explore what happened to the franchise favourites *after Jedi*. Even if you felt burned by the prequels, the prospect of seeing Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher and Harrison Ford returning to their iconic roles is simply irresistible.

"It never occurred to me to think about [returning to play Han Solo] because I never thought it would come back," drawls Ford. "I never thought we'd do another." While *The Force Awakens* follows on from *Return Of The Jedi*, the films are separated by an almost-real time 30-year gap. Ford and co don't need to pretend to be several decades younger. For actor and director, the idea of slapping Han Solo back on the screen just as he was at the end of *Jedi* didn't seem right. Time has passed. Things have changed. "I think it was really important to [Harrison] that Han Solo had lived a life," Abrams tells *TF*. "Meaning he can't come in and do, or be expected to do, the same thing he did when he was 30. And so we both obviously agreed on that. It would be ridiculous if he hadn't matured somewhat. But at the same time, as we all know, how much do we ever really change? And so he's still very much Han Solo."

"It should have felt ridiculous..." admits Ford. "I will tell you, it felt great. I was proud and grateful to once again be involved." Back as Princess Leia Organa ("Darth Vader's little girl"), Fisher deadpans that, "Nothing has changed except the hair." While plot details have been more covert than the Death Star blueprints, you can glean from the trailers that returnees Han, Leia and an all-but-invisible Luke (not to mention Chewie, C-3PO and R2-D2) will be secondary to the main plot, as the story is carried forward by two characters played by

relative unknowns, the lack of A-list leads echoing the young cast Lucas picked back in '77. Finding the right actors was never going to be a small task. *Attack The Block*'s John Boyega won the role of Finn, a Stormtrooper who abandons his duties in search of a higher calling, after enduring "seven months of an interesting, *X Factor*-esque audition process".

When we meet Boyega in a sleek suite in London's Corinthia Hotel in September 2015, he looks every inch the movie star in a black leather bomber jacket, Clubmaster sunglasses tucked into his shirt pocket. It's certainly a change from being in full costume in Abu Dhabi. "The Stormtrooper outfit... we have a long, uncomfortable relationship," he laughs.

Newcomer Daisy Ridley – a 23-year-old Brit for whom *The Force Awakens* marks a first major film role (she had scenes deleted from *The Inbetweeners 2*) – had a considerably more comfortable costume, befitting the fact her character, lone scavenger Rey, hails from the desert planet Jakku that Abu Dhabi stands in for. "I was super-cool – much cooler than John in a Stormtrooper outfit," she giggles. She's not so inconspicuous today though, brimming with energy and oozing confidence in a black and white pinstripe suit. Ridley secured the role after five auditions over a seven-month process.

Obviously J.J.'s mind-control tricks have worked, as the new duo are unwilling to give up any form of spoiler, or even the vaguest plot detail. Boyega doesn't even fall into *TF*'s trap when we ask him if he'd describe his character as the Luke or Han of *The Force Awakens*. "Ooh," he gasps, "that would be giving it away. But he does have a very nice light-hearted comedic element to him that's quite dry and sometimes quite outward. For me, he's very likeable. >>



"IT'S FANTASTIC BEING AN ACTION FIGURE..."

John Boyega suits up...

So what's it like to be part of the *Star Wars* saga?

It's shocking. It's shocking, it's exciting, and it feels like a blessing to be part of something that people just love so much. And also, more importantly, a responsibility. But so far it's calm before the storm and it feels steady. I'm not banking on it [*staying that way*], though!

As trailers are released, what does that ramped expectation do to the actors?

I think specifically the first trailer we were given, the first teaser, was obviously composed with original music from John Williams. That itself gives the fans the expectation of this picture paying homage to the originals. Because the music is there. You can tell they're practical effects. When you see BB-8, you know that it's puppetry. It's a real droid. So those things make people feel like, "You know what? They're gonna go back to the originals with this one."

What was it like to get to work with the original cast, like Harrison Ford?

Harrison's great. I had a fixated excitement to meet the dude because I love Han Solo so much. And also because I thought it would be fun to get under his skin at certain times. I call him my best friend on set. I remember saying to Harrison, "Are me and you best friends?" He goes, "No." I go, "Why?" He goes, "I don't like you, kid." But it's a really, really great test. Especially with Mark.

Mark's got really great stories about his experiences. And Carrie's got Gary the dog to keep you entertained while she tells you about certain things. But they're all very, very fun and enthusiastic to come back... It's hard to really know what it's like for them coming back.

What did *Star Wars* mean to you in Peckham when you were growing up?

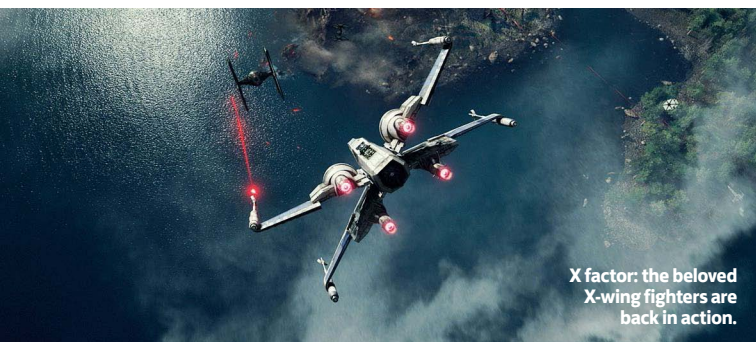
It just meant, like, action figures. Action figures, games, movies, toys. What it means to any other kids, to be honest with you. It was an experience. I got a Darth Maul action figure. Then after doing enough research, I was released into a world of Jedis and flying things. As a young kid, I definitely was into all of that kind of stuff. It was definitely cool to be Han Solo for a few days, then re-enact... whoever gets the low end of the stick has to be Darth Vader. [*laughs*]

What about becoming an action figure yourself – is that weird to think about?

I think it's fantastic. I've used it for my family. My mum and dad are like, "John, are you travelling again?" I'm like, "Yes, Dad. But take this. You can have me all the time." That's the main reason why I'm into this merchandise, so I can be everywhere at once. [*laughs*]

Can you keep your lightsaber?

I'm going to. Because so many people have asked me that, I'm actually going to say, "Can I have a saber please?" **MM**



X factor: the beloved X-wing fighters are back in action.



Battle stations: Finn (John Boyega) and Poe (Oscar Isaac) prepare for war.

MAKING OF

“R2-D2 WAS MY FRIEND!”

Oscar-winner Lupita Nyong'o is poetry in motion-capture...

Were you a *Star Wars* fan when you were a kid in Kenya?

R2-D2 was my friend! When I wasn't in school, I was with him. [laughs] Then in one of the episodes [Return Of The Jedi], one of the characters [Nien Nunb] speaks in Kikuyu, which is a Kenyan language. And we were all like, “Oh my goodness! We are in *Star Wars*!”

What were the challenges of doing motion-capture work to form your character, Maz Kanata, in *The Force Awakens*?

You have the extra challenge, or the comfort or the luxury, of not having the costume and the makeup and the hair to make you feel like the character... Watching Andy Serkis in *Lord Of The Rings*, and then later in *Rise Of The Planet Of The Apes*, I was so intrigued by motion-capture and what he was able to do with it. To have him on *Star Wars* was invaluable.

What's the best piece of advice Andy Serkis gave you?

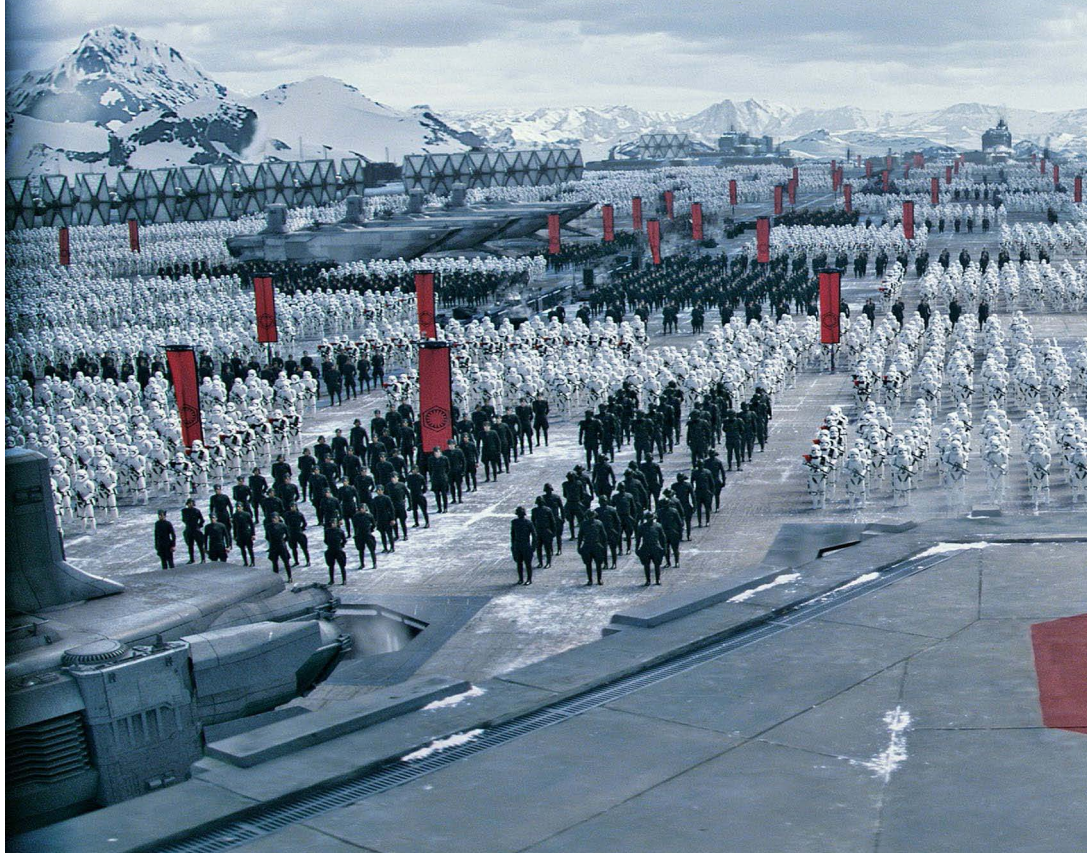
That working on a motion-capture performance is first and foremost like working on any character. You have to know who you are and do the same character development and research that you would if you were physically in the role.

How did you find J.J. Abrams' approach to directing a *Star Wars* film?

He's able to make it look so easy, and yet you know he's working so hard. Every day, he made that daunting set seem like home. To be able to do that is so important. Because we are all aware of what this film means to the world. But to leave that all aside – and say, “Hey, this is ours to make. Let's do it!” – was really, really great.

It must have been a buzz working with the original cast?

My first day on set I was looking for a scented candle, and my assistant brought me this candle and said it was from Carrie Fisher. I was like, “Oh, wow! I haven't even met her and I have her scented candle!” Then I met her and she was so sweet and so funny. I remember thinking, “Princess Leia's really cool!” The fact that we have this opportunity to continue this story 30 years later and that we have Harrison Ford and Carrie Fisher and Mark Hamill involved, and I get to be a small part of that is really a precious thing... I'm enjoying every minute of it. **JMc**



I think the whole combination of everyone – Finn and Rey and Poe – they're quite likeable characters and quite sweet, but quite heroic and epic at the same time.” Poe would be the amusingly named Poe Dameron, played by Oscar Isaac, who completes the heroic triumvirate at the core of the film. On the same subject, Isaac himself admits that Poe brings “a specific colour that he adds to the film. It's one that's energetic. There's almost an old-school, *His Girl Friday*, Cary Grant kind of quickness to it, and that speed is something that J.J. really likes.”

Ridley does at least give some sense of where we'll find her character in Act One. “In comparison to the [female characters] before – Leia and her mother were princesses; they were born into privilege. And Rey is not. She's alone. She's literally scavenging for food every day. At the beginning of the film, she has no one. Along the way she goes on this incredible emotional journey.” Early on Rey can be seen searching through the vast

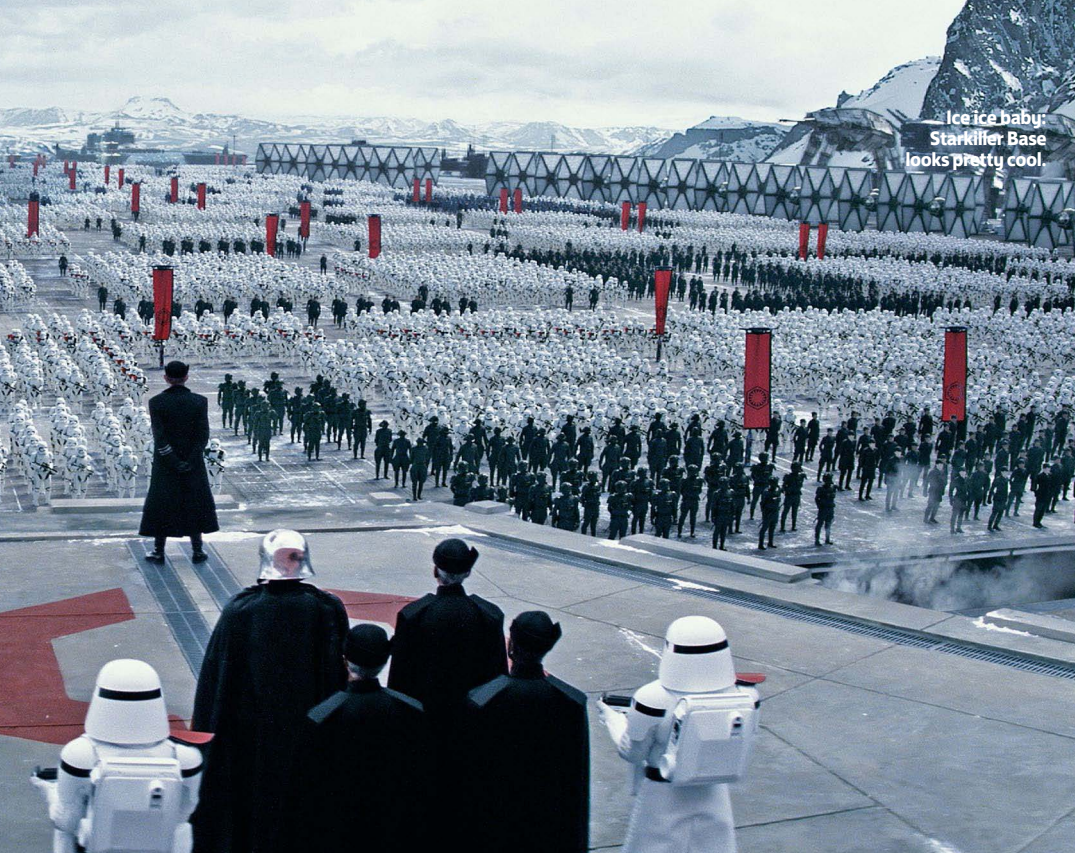
wreckage of a downed Imperial Destroyer. Thirty years on, the Empire has fallen on hard times, but the First Order has risen in its place.

Led by Andy Serkis' Supreme Leader Snoke (an as-yet unseen performance-capture creation), the First Order are the Big Bads of *TFA*. Among their number is the mysterious Kylo Ren, played by *Girls* actor Adam Driver, a masked, 'broad-saber'-wielding warrior who seems to be occupying the obligatory 'cool-as-fuck badass villain' spot. A Darth Vader devotee, Kylo Ren keeps the remains of the erstwhile Anakin Skywalker's charred helmet close by, promising, “I will finish what you started.” Tall and rangy, Driver is new to the blockbuster experience. “I feel like some of the movies are so heavy on special effects or visuals and a lot of things get lost as far as two people talking to one another,” he says. “And that was something that J.J. stressed from the beginning; it was all character. There was hardly any talk of special effects.”

Also on the Dark Side, is Domhnall Gleeson's

Backseat driver:
new droid BB-8
hitches a ride.





THE FORCE AWAKENS

were going to be making [another] *Star Wars*, I was like a dog with a bone," she grins. "I was absolutely focused on being seen for it. I so, so wanted to be a part of it."

Badgering her agent, Christie finally auditioned. "I was shocked that the brilliant Nina Gold – who was casting *Star Wars*, and who also cast *Game Of Thrones* – said, 'Oh yeah, we've been talking about her.' Once I'd scooped myself off the floor..." The *GOT* team were flexible with her shooting schedule, and before she knew it she was striding onto set in that distinctive suit of armour. "It was a very interesting experience because one of the reasons I love Captain Phasma is not only is she the first female villain in *Star Wars*, but I think it's unusual for a female character to be presented [this way] – we don't judge her because of the way she looks in flesh."

You might wonder how a character will retain an essence of femininity when her face is concealed by a featureless mask, but Christie wasn't concerned. "From the second I put the costume on, I really felt like I wanted to have fun with it," she says. "Definitely I wanted the character to have femininity and a heavy dose of sass because I don't think we've seen that in

General Hux. "General Hux is probably one of the bad guys, depending on your point of view," laughs the affable Irishman, who bagged his role one day before the now-famous cast table-read took place in April 2014. "He works with Kylo Ren and Snoke, and is in charge of the military operation. He isn't a particularly nice fella." Clean-shaven, with his ginger hair swept back, he looks like he could have stepped off the set of the Death Star in '77, the type of subordinate you could imagine Vader strangling with a Force chokehold. Although, the First Order's stronghold would probably eclipse the Death Star in sheer scale. "The name of the First Order base is Starkiller Base," confirms Abrams, with a nod that harks back to Lucas' early script drafts for *The Star Wars* (Skywalker was Starkiller back then). The base itself is an ice planet that has been converted into a world-destroying weapon.



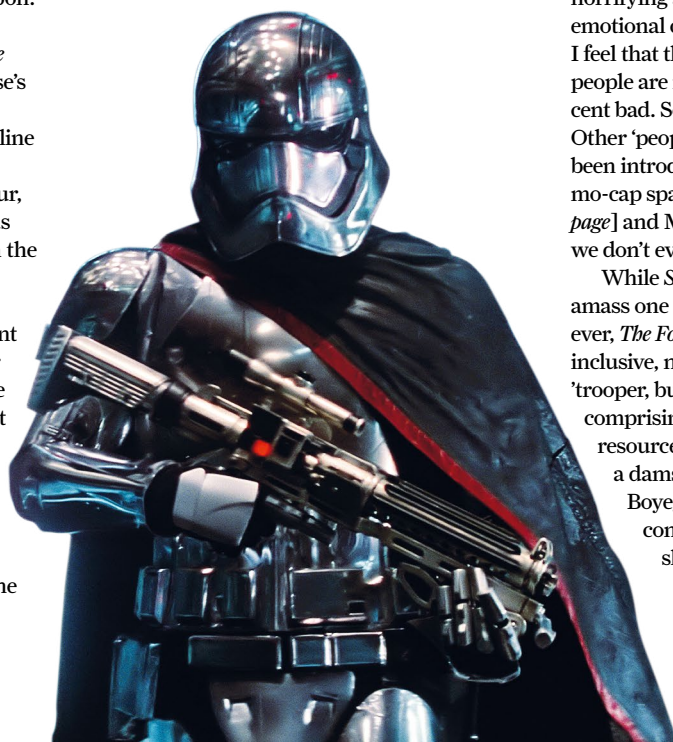
**"I WAS PROUD
AND GRATEFUL TO
BE INVOLVED"**
HARRISON FORD

a Stormtrooper before. We haven't seen a female Stormtrooper behave that way."

It seems that one-dimensional villainy is most certainly not on the cards. Kylo Ren might wind up torturing Poe, but Isaac has praise for the actor behind the mask. "I think Adam will be horrifying and very scary, but also with a real emotional core." Adds Christie: "Personally, I feel that these characters are people. In life, people are not 100 per cent good or 100 per cent bad. So, it's just looking at parts as people." Other 'people' on the call sheet that we've not been introduced to yet include Lupita Nyong'o's mo-cap space pirate Maz Kanata [see *opposite page*] and Max von Sydow's unnamed character; we don't even know which side they're on.

While *Star Wars*' enduring appeal has seen it amass one of the mightiest pop-culture fanbases ever, *The Force Awakens* is aiming to be even more inclusive, not only with a formidable female 'trooper, but also with a young hero duo comprising a black lead character, and a gutsy, resourceful female hero, as far away from a damsel as you could hope. Depressingly, Boyega's casting attracted some racist comments online. The actor moved to shut down the haters as far back as November 2014, when he took to social media to politely address >>

And in terms of the muscle, *The Force Awakens* is introducing the franchise's first female Stormtrooper, Captain Phasma (right). Played by Gwendoline Christie (*Game Of Thrones*' Brienne of Tarth), Phasma has a gleaming chrome suit of armour, and her name was inspired by the murderous reflective sphere in horror curio *Phantasm*. In the flesh, Christie stands proudly at 6ft 3in (plus heels), but she couldn't be less intimidating. Due to the limited (read, non-existent) amount of info the cast can actually share about their characters, we don't know if she'll actually be seen *sans* mask in the film, but when we meet she's in a simple white shirt and black trousers, blonde hair swept to the side. She laughs in *TF*'s face (nicely) when we ask if she can tell us anything about the characters she interacts with. "No!" She is at least more forthcoming when it comes to talking about the casting process. "As soon as I heard that they





Just deserts: Abu Dhabi stands in for Jakku.

the issue by saying, “To whom it may concern... Get used to it.” The problem again reared its ugly head when a small minority of Twitter users started a #BoycottStarWarsVII hashtag, claiming the film represented “anti-white propaganda”. Thankfully, the hashtag was swiftly hijacked by users mocking its bigotry. And if the final trailer’s record-breaking 112m views in 24 hours is anything to go by, that ‘boycott’ represents a small minority indeed. In the UK, the film broke records for pre-sale tickets, with more than 200,000 sold within the first day. Boyega doesn’t go into detail on the subject of representation in the film, but he does say, “It’s going to be amazing for everybody to relate. Especially with the strong

female characters that we have, it’s going to be a great opportunity for everyone to see themselves represented up there in space.”

Ridley similarly refuses to put a reductive slant on the issue. “I think especially with *The Hunger Games* and stuff like that, there is a huge audience across the board – gender, sexuality, everything – for big films that tell action stories with an emotional heart, and *Star Wars* is one of those,” she says, adding, “I don’t think it’s just girls that will look up to Rey... She’s someone that I think people will really connect with.”

Incorporating the original-trilogy actors into a film populated with wholly new characters is just one way in which *The Force Awakens* is meshing

the old and new. It also extends to the technology, which has demonstrably leant on real props and settings much more than the green-screen-heavy prequel trilogy. “We got to use all sorts of technology,” explains Abrams. “Even stuff that hadn’t been used in a long time. There were a lot of assumptions that certain things would be CG, and we ended up doing them practically. We used CG to remove things instead of adding things.” As well as the alien who interrupted Abrams during his ‘Force For Change’ charity video, *The Force Awakens*’ true scene-stealer looks to be BB-8, the ball droid who became 2015’s must-have Christmas present months before the film came out. BB-8 is “so difficult” to work with, jokes Ridley

“CARRIE FISHER IS BLOODY BRILLIANT...”

Daisy Ridley’s head is in the stars...

Can you tell us a little bit about your experience of *Star Wars* before you became involved?

My experience with *Star Wars* wasn’t extensive. I’d watched them all and I enjoyed them, but I never really knew the love that people had for *Star Wars*. But that’s not because I’m a girl. That’s just because of the person I am. I’m not really crazy into anything. I don’t really have a person that I want to meet. I never had posters of people on my wall or anything like that. I think maybe the female audience for *Star Wars* is underestimated, because I’ve already met a lot of women who do love it.

Did you feel daunted working with any of the original cast?

I felt daunted working. Period. As the Americans say. I had never done a film before. I had never done a film with famous people before, obviously. So I felt nervous anyway. Obviously meeting them there’s a second where you’re like, “Oh my God, you’re Harrison Ford.” And then they’re just like a normal

guy. So it’s that thing of working with people who are really good at what they do, which is always scary, but not because he’s Harrison Ford, but because he’s a great actor still in the prime of his acting career.

What was it like working with Carrie Fisher?

Carrie interviewed me last night. She was bloody brilliant. I am going to be so interested to read the interview. She’s great. When I first met her, we were at dinner. She reminded me of this last night because she basically swore at me when I said I didn’t remember what advice she had given me. And she called me an “F***er”. She said at the dinner that it’s really hard to date people because she doesn’t want to give people the satisfaction, “I was with Princess Leia.” She is one of a kind. She is so smart and funny.

What’s it like to have your own action figure now?

It’s very cool. When we did the Disney story thing, this girl came up to me and was like, “Oh, would you sign this?” I was like, “Why is it Finn? Where’s Rey?”

She was like, “They sold out.” I was loving life. It’s nice. It’s a cool feeling. I do not have them around my house. My sister displayed them around the house and I was like, “This is absolutely not OK. This is narcissism at its highest.” They’re in the cupboard.

Is BB-8 going to steal the film?

Yeah. Absolutely. I’m fine with that.

What was it like to fly the Millennium Falcon?

In the behind-the-scenes [video], I do steer the Falcon, and I just mainly felt sick. [Laughs] I love rides, but when you’re going again and again and again, you’re just like, “Oh God.” And I need to make out like I’m flying a spaceship through space. It’s difficult.

You’ve apparently started shooting *Episode VIII* already...

No, we start in January. And that’s nice because we have two weeks of “Oh my God, the film’s out!” and then we start the next one. **MM**



Direct action: J.J. Abrams on set with Boyega.

of the 'actor' operated by two puppeteers. "They were so skilled," she continues, "He really felt like he was alive. He was given a soul by those guys."

"It's incredible how much the animatronic puppeteering work has evolved, too; it's not just the computers that have gotten better, but practical effects have gotten better," says Abrams. "And I think you'll see that was our goal – the story was the master we were serving, not, 'Oh here's a visual effect or technology,' and making

made real. "It feels proper and real and tangible and physical," says Serkis, whose pioneering performance-capture will be a prime example of modern technology sitting alongside the puppets. "I think the fans will flip their minds." Domhnall Gleeson calls the Pinewood sets "the stuff you imagined when you were a kid that you didn't think would happen any more". Boyega can't hide his glee at eating his lunch on the Millennium Falcon, and Isaac warmly remembers the cameo

"WE USED ALL SORTS OF TECH - STUFF THAT HASN'T BEEN USED IN AGES"

J.J. ABRAMS

sure we were working really hard to tell as good a story as we could using whatever technology was available, old and new."

Boyega's Finn's journey from AWOL Stormtrooper to hero will eventually see him wielding a lightsaber in a face-off with Kylo Ren. "It's heavy to swing," he says of the coolest weapon in the galaxy. "You've got to pump some weights to really, really swing that lightsaber. But it's fantastic. You feel very, very powerful." Christie, meanwhile, was happy to get her hands on some firepower after her sword-wielding days on *Thrones*. "It's very timely that I should, at last, have a gun," she smiles. "Captain Phasma has a phenomenal blaster. It's the most beautifully crafted thing. Everything on it works, although I haven't tried to blast anyone with it yet."

Strolling around the sets, even the cast are blown away by the attention to detail, stepping into an imaginary world of their childhood

given to his *Star Wars*-mad uncle by Abrams.

There's the inescapable sense that the film is being made from a fan's perspective, such is the enthusiasm that beams from everyone involved.

"The fans do own *Star Wars*; it's a fundamental fact," says Boyega. "They're the ones that have built up this culture within this franchise." The sentiment echoes with Abrams, who's serving the fanbase that he's so clearly a part of. "Obviously the fans aren't just incredibly passionate, but they feel in a weird way like family," says the director. "Meaning, I know what it feels like to love this world that George Lucas created. So it was important to me that we do something that honours their commitment. But you can't make a movie for the fans. You have to make a movie that you believe in your heart fans will love. And we're doing the best we can to do that." **TF**

Star Wars: The Force Awakens opens on 17 December.



THE FORCE AWAKENS

SPOILER(-ISH) ALERT

Titbits we've teased from the tie-ins...



SHATTERED EMPIRE

Gen up on Poe Dameron's family history in this Marvel mini-series set in the immediate aftermath of the Battle Of Endor. Could some related business involving Force plants crop up (ahem) in *TFA*?



AFTERMATH

Chuck Wendig's post-*ROTJ* novel is chocka with hints and teases of future developments; there's a visit to key *TFA* planet Jakku that sets it up as a sub-Tatooine nowheresville, plus what could be our first encounter with a major big bad.



BATTLEFRONT

Electronic Arts' new videogame mostly replays conflicts from the original trilogy, but from 8 December you can download extra level 'Battle Of Jakku' and find out how that Star Destroyer got wedged in the earth, as seen in *TFA* trailers.



TALKING TOYS

The trailers may be a bit tight-lipped with dialogue, but you can't shut the toys up. We're going to suggest that Kylo Ren (via the voice-changer mask) isn't speaking in an amorous context when he says stuff like "I feel it too"; "Don't fight it"; and "That weapon is mine!" Meanwhile, Finn's action figure warns: "We go back to Jakku and we die." Doesn't that place have *anything* going for it?



C-3PO

The multi-lingual worrywart has a red arm? Old news. How he got it, though, is a mystery that'll be solved by this Marvel one-off (because who wants to read about him every month?) hitting shelves in December.



LEGO SETS

The first wave of *TFA* LEGO sets gives us some fresh character names to chew on: alongside a silver-fox Han, the Millennium Falcon includes mini-figures of Tasu Leech and 'Kanjiklub Gang Member', whoever they are. Presumably the ship's hull doesn't open up like a sunflower in the movie, but who knows? **KH**

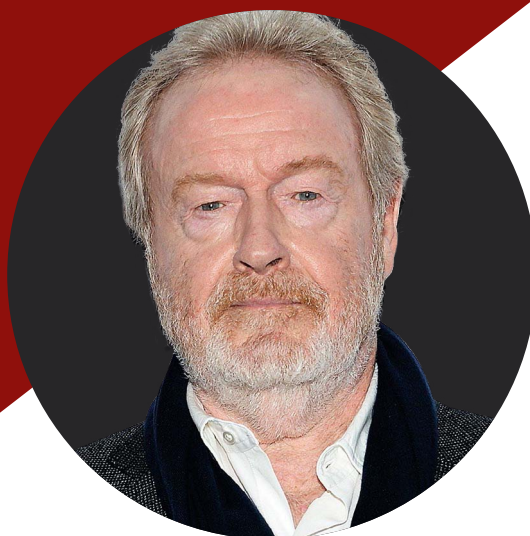
WE ♥ STAR WARS

From James Cameron to Guillermo del Toro, the *Star Wars* saga has inspired a generation of filmmakers. Here, they share their memories of the franchise that changed the face of sci-fi cinema...

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM

GUILLERMO DEL TORO

"I first saw *Star Wars* in a small multiplex in Guadalajara, Mexico, at a matinee. I went around the block and lined up again to see it in every single show that day, until midnight. I then bought a Super 8 print of film selects that included the stop-motion chessboard and some saber training. I had never seen world-building at that scale and with that much detail. Lucas poured all of himself in there. And he made everything feel lived in and real. You come out of movies transformed once in a blue moon. *Star Wars* changed the entire landscape of what was possible and what was not."



RIDLEY SCOTT

"I never saw or felt audience participation like that, in my life. The theatre was shaking... By the time the movie was finished, it was so stunning that it made me miserable. That's the highest compliment I can give it; I was miserable for a week. I hadn't met George at that point, but I thought, 'Fuck George.' Then, somebody sent me this script called *Alien*. I said, 'Wow. I'll do it.' *Star Wars* is absolutely seminal for me, that first one George Lucas directed. So creatively brilliant that he decided to make it the flip side of the coin to *2001*, and it certainly became the flip side of *Alien*, which I would do two years later. George made a fairy tale story, with a princess, the young prince, and the cynical Harrison Ford playing Han Solo. To me, it was an absolutely perfect rendition of a great comic serial."





JAMES CAMERON

“MY REACTION TO IT WAS NOT, ‘OH, WOW, THAT’S COOL. I WANT TO SEE MORE.’ IT WAS, ‘OH WOW, I BETTER GET OFF MY BUTT BECAUSE SOMEBODY IS DOING THIS STUFF, YOU KNOW, AND THEY’RE BEATING ME TO IT.’”

PETER JACKSON

“Three of four school friends and I had bought tickets in advance for the first day, but we still had to queue up outside the Cinerama theatre in Wellington. *Star Wars* delivered. I remember standing and cheering and waving my arms around when Luke was flying towards the Death Star. I remember being incredibly overwrought at the excitement of it all. It was probably the first time in my life I’d ever become that heavily engaged in a movie, to the point of wanting to jump up and down and yell at the hero.”



THE FORCE AWAKENS



BEN WHEATLEY

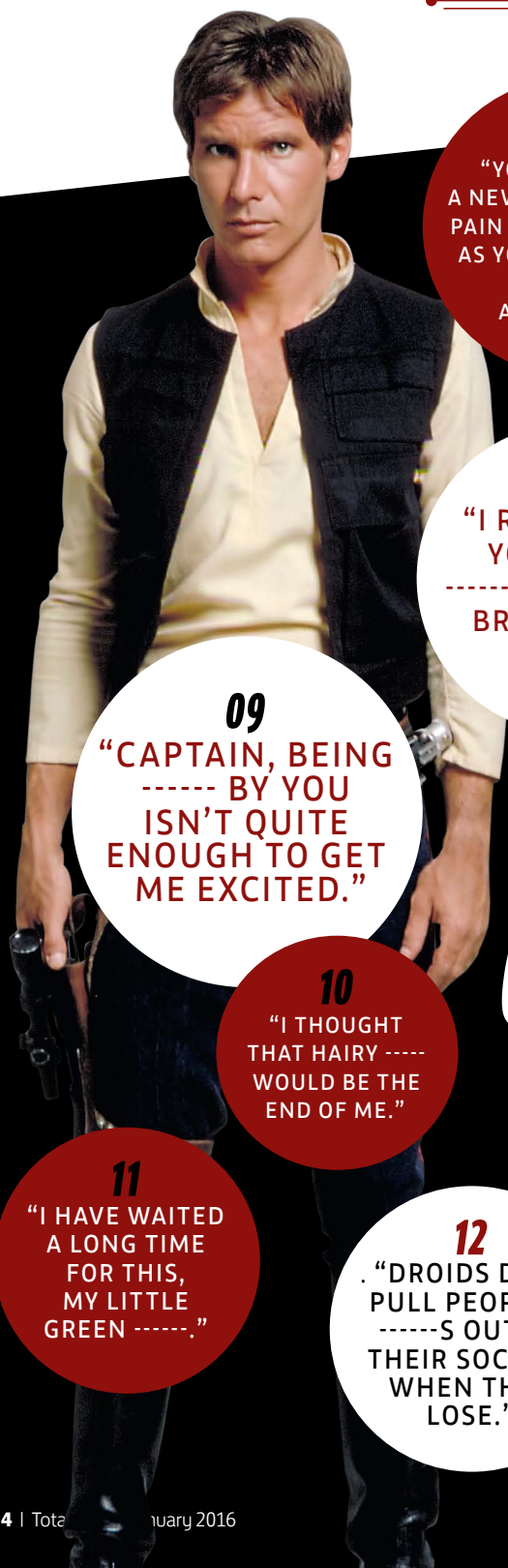
“The first I knew about *Star Wars* was when a kid came back from America with a C-3PO T-shirt. It was weird and exotic. I remember us all standing round in the park trying to work out what it meant. Then there was a colour article about *Star Wars* in a Sunday magazine. I remember looking at the Imperial cruisers and thinking they were real. In those days, with the staggered releases, you could feel the radiation of a big cinema event like this coming from across the Atlantic. Six months after the US release, it hit the UK. I saw *Star Wars* in 1978. I was five. Though I remember more clearly when it played on TV in ‘82, of re-watching it on tape every morning for a whole summer until every tiny sound effect was burnt into my memory. We only had three tapes – the other two had *Ladykillers* and *Alien* on them.

In the ‘70s, Buster Crabbe’s *Flash Gordon* was on TV in the afternoons and *Star Wars* films played all the time. I was mad for the *Sinbad* movies, anything with Harryhausen creatures, *Star Trek* and *Doctor Who*. Lucas minced all that culture up and sprinkled a bit of *THX 1138* on top of it. No wonder it hit us all so hard.

Star Wars has been with me since I was a child. I always go back for more. But nothing can ever top the first one. It’s like Roger Moore is my Bond and Tom Baker is my Doctor. I’m fused with these things because of first contact. Because of never knowing any different before being exposed to something so culturally strong. Did *Star Wars* make me want to make films? Not really. As far as I was concerned, the first time I saw *Star Wars* it was a documentary. I had no clue it wasn’t real. Fuck films, I wanted to be Han Solo.”

REVENGE OF THE QUIZ

Will the force be with you? Or is looking at the answers your only hope?



01

"YOU WILL FIND
A NEW DEFINITION OF
PAIN AND SUFFERING
AS YOU ARE SLOWLY
----- OVER
A THOUSAND
YEARS."

02

"THE -----
IS SWELLING
IN YOU..."

03

"HOKEY RELIGIONS
AND ANCIENT
WEAPONS ARE NO
MATCH FOR A GOOD
----- AT YOUR
SIDE, KID."

04

"WONDERFUL GIRL.
EITHER I'M GOING
TO ----- HER OR
I'M BEGINNING TO
LIKE HER."

05

"I RECOGNISED
YOUR FOUL
----- WHEN I WAS
BROUGHT ON
BOARD."

06

"----- IS THE
PATH TO THE DARK SIDE.
----- LEADS TO -----,
----- LEADS TO -----,
----- LEADS TO -----.
I SENSE MUCH -----
IN YOU."

07

"THERE'S
ALWAYS A
BIGGER
-----."

09

"CAPTAIN, BEING
----- BY YOU
ISN'T QUITE
ENOUGH TO GET
ME EXCITED."

08

"MUDHOLE?
SLIMY?
MY -----
THIS IS!"

10

"I THOUGHT
THAT HAIRY -----
WOULD BE THE
END OF ME."

COMPLETE THE QUOTE, YOU MUST

Help us find the words we're looking
for in these Star Wars quotes...

11

"I HAVE WAITED
A LONG TIME
FOR THIS,
MY LITTLE
GREEN -----."

12

"DROIDS DON'T
PULL PEOPLE'S
-----S OUT OF
THEIR SOCKETS
WHEN THEY
LOSE."

13

"SHORT -----
IS BETTER
THAN NO -----
AT ALL."

14

"I NEED

MEN!"

15

"YOUR -----S
ARE VERY
IMPRESSIVE. YOU
MUST BE VERY
PROUD."

ANSWERS 1: Digested, 2: Hate, 3: Blaster, 4: Kill, 5: Stench,
6: Fear/Fear/Anger/Hate/Hate/Suffering/Fear, 7: Fish,
8: Home, 9: Held, 10: Beast, 11: Friend, 12: Arms,
13: Help/Help, 14: More, 15: Clones



DIFFICULT JEDI MASTER

- 01** Where do we (briefly) encounter a fellow who's become known as the "Ice Cream Man"?
- 02** How many Oscar nominations did the original *Star Wars* receive?
- 03** Who's the bounty hunter who tries to assassinate Padme at the beginning of *Attack Of The Clones*?
- 04** What planet does Lando's Millennium Falcon co-pilot, Nien Nunb, call home?
- 05** Name the *Big Sleep* screenwriter who co-scripted *The Empire Strikes Back*.
- 06** Who or what is the Dykstraflex?
- 07** What species is Sebulba?
- 08** What species are Figrin D'an and the Modal Nodes, the Cantina band in *A New Hope*?
- 09** Where would you find the Dianoga?
- 10** Who is the archduke of the Geonosians in *Attack Of The Clones*?

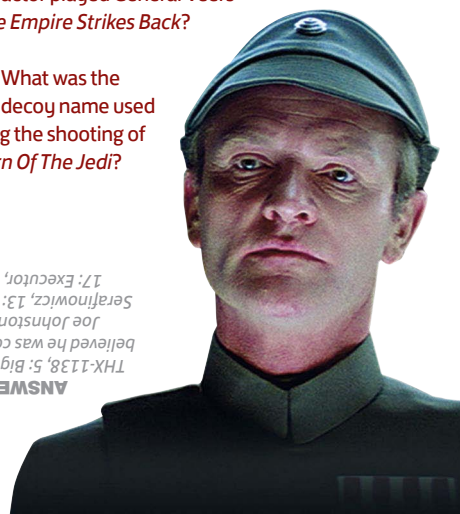
ANSWERS 1: Bespin (Cloud City), 2: 11, 3: Zam Wesell, 4: Sullust, 5: Leigh Brackett, 6: A motion-controlled camera invented to shoot SFX in the original movie, 7: Dug, 8: Bith, 9: It's the trash compactor alien in *A New Hope*, 10: Poggle the Lesser

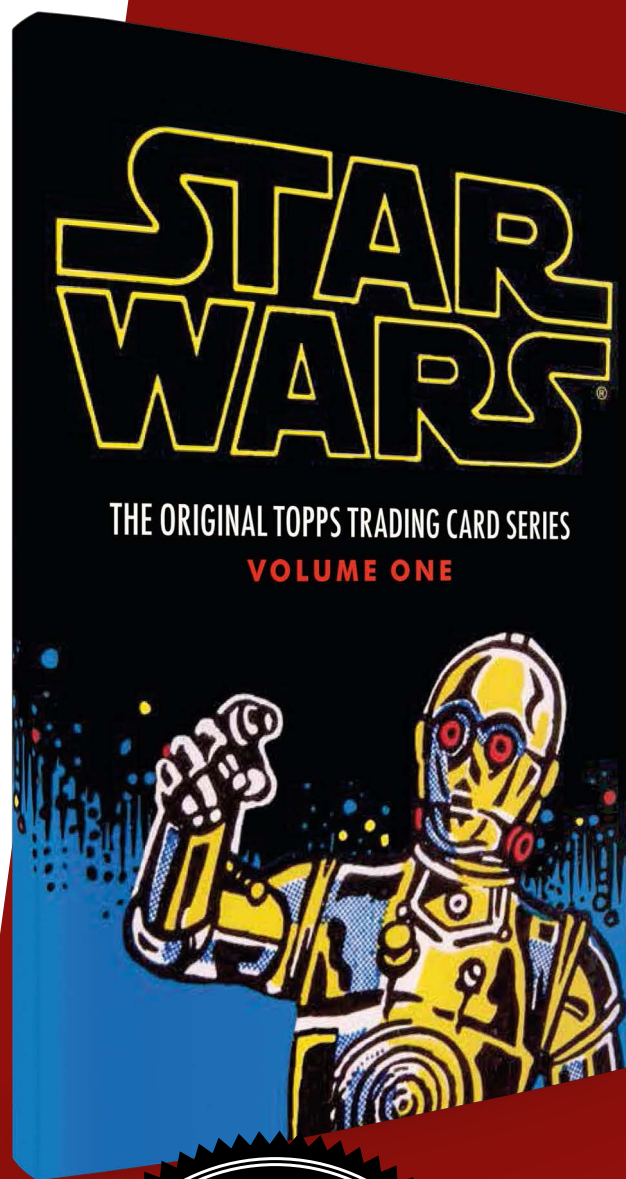


EASY YOUNG PADAWAN

- 01** Which future *Cheers* and Pixar star played a Rebel officer on Hoth in *The Empire Strikes Back*?
- 02** What species are the short, pig-like creatures who perform menial tasks in Cloud City?
- 03** What's Wedge Antilles' call sign in *Star Wars: A New Hope*?
- 04** What's the name of George Lucas' debut movie, frequently referenced in the *Star Wars* films?
- 05** Which of these is not a Jedi? Ki-Adi Mundi, Plo Koon, Kit Fisto, Yarael Poof, Biggs Darklighter.
- 06** Who's the *Star Wars* sound designer who cameos as an Imperial officer in *Return Of The Jedi*?
- 07** What is the name of Anakin Skywalker's father?
- 08** In which Arnold Schwarzenegger film did Jake Lloyd co-star before playing Anakin Skywalker?
- 09** Which *Star Wars* designer went on to direct *The Rocketeer* and *Captain America: The First Avenger*?
- 10** Where is Luke Skywalker heading at the beginning of *A New Hope* to pick up some power converters?
- 11** Which movie's opening crawl starts with the line "There is unrest in the Galactic Senate"?
- 12** Which British comic actor voiced Darth Maul?
- 13** What's the name of Princess Leia's bounty hunter disguise in *Return Of The Jedi*?
- 14** Who wrote *Splinter Of The Mind's Eye*, the first follow-up novel to the original *Star Wars*?
- 15** What's the name of Chewbacca's home planet?
- 16** What's the name of Lando Calrissian's cyborg aide in Cloud City?
- 17** Name Darth Vader's Super Star Destroyer.
- 18** What's the name of Jabba the Hutt's pet Kowakian Monkey Lizard?
- 19** Which *Game Of Thrones* actor played General Veers in *The Empire Strikes Back*?
- 20** What was the decoy name used during the shooting of *Return Of The Jedi*?

ANSWERS 1: John Ratzenberger, 2: Ugnaughts, 3: Red Two, 4: THX-1138, 5: Biggs Darklighter, 6: Ben Burt, 7: There was no father - it's believed he was conceived by the Mith-chlorians, 8: Jingle All The Way, 9: Joe Johnston, 10: Tosche Station, 11: Attack Of The Clones, 12: Peter Serafinowicz, 13: Boush, 14: Alan Dean Foster, 15: Kashyyuk, 16: Lobot, 17: Executor, 18: Salacious Crumb, 19: Julian Glover, 20: Blue Harvest





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READER
OFFER**

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and quote REF 50521**





STICKY MOMENTS

TOTAL FILM HAS GIVEN AWAY FOUR EXCLUSIVE ART CARDS OF STAR WARS TOPPS TRADING CARDS WITH THIS ISSUE. **NOW GET THE WHOLE SET!**

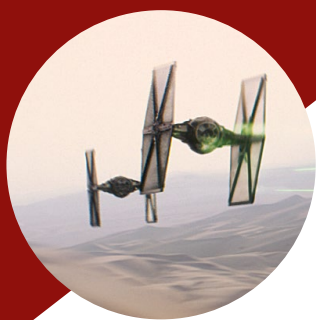
Remember getting your pocket money and legging it to the newsagents to buy your Topps *Star Wars* stickers – usually along with a delicious *Curly Wurly* or a ‘quarter’ of sweets? And that awesome moment of opening the packet to find you finally had that long-sought sticker to complete your book...

Topps first published its iconic *Star Wars* trading cards in 1977 and 1978 in five sets of collectable cards and stickers, and it has now reprinted the complete run of 330 cards and 55 stickers (originally sold one per pack) in this must-have book.

The deluxe compilation features the retro

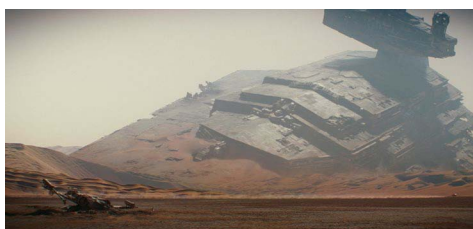
stickers – complete with their charming movie facts, story summaries and actor profiles – as well as four bonus trading cards and an introduction and commentary by Gary Gerani, the original editor of the *Star Wars* Topps series. A special afterword by Robert V. Conte spotlights the rare *Star Wars* Wonder Bread trading cards, also reprinted for the first time.

Kids today, eh? Don’t know what they’re missing! But this book should give younger *Star Wars* fans a taste of seventies merchandise in a world before the web or smartphones, while older generations will finally have the complete collection to reminisce over...



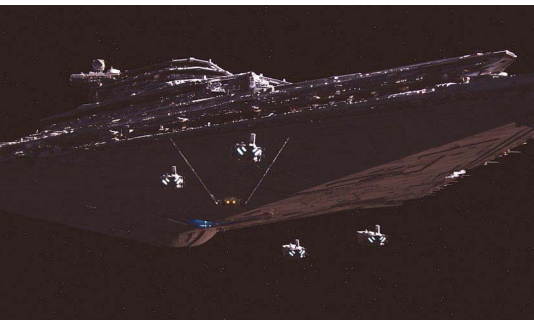
TIE FIGHTERS

It's not just the X-wings (right) that have been rebranded. The First Order has given their own space fighters a paint job too. Rather than grey with black panels the new TIEs are largely black with striking white panels on the wings and a red embellishment left of the central section. Said to be a two-seater craft with enhanced weapons and sensors, Finn appears to nick one of these nimble vehicles during his daring escape from a Star Destroyer before crash landing it on Jakku, heading for the bleak Cratertown settlement.



STAR DESTROYERS

The Galactic Empire was dealt a deadly blow at the Battle Of Endor, but never count an evil military regime out. A year after the death of the Emperor and Darth Vader, the Battle of Jakku raged over the Outer Rim desert planet. The dogfight, which will be fully revealed in videogame *Star Wars Battlefront*, has so far been kept under wraps – but it's evident that at least one Star Destroyer tanked. Known as The Inflictor, it was crashed by its Imperial captain on Jakku to prevent it falling into the hands of the New Republic. The new trailer sees Rey scaling inside the innards of the junked Imperial I-Class craft, but somewhat worryingly for the Resistance, the First Order appears to be just as keen on these Imperial behemoths as the Empire was. Dubbed 'The Finalizer', this dagger-shaped Star Destroyer looks to be a formidable weapon in their arsenal. It's a safe bet that General Hux is in command of this.



TRAVEL GUIDE

The vehicles of Star Wars: The Force Awakens...

WORDS JORDAN FARLEY AND JAMES MOTTRAM

THE X-WINGS

When J.J. Abrams first unveiled *The Force Awakens'* new-look X-wing a debate raged: was it an X-wing Starfighter or a Z-95 Headhunter, as seen in *The Clone Wars*? The vessel's double engines seemed to imply the latter, but Disney was quick to clarify: it is, of course, an X-wing, but one based on Ralph McQuarrie's original concept art (itself based on a Joe Johnston design). Rather than a single circular engine on each of the four wings – as seen on the T-65 X-wings flown by the Rebel Alliance in the original trilogy – the Resistance X-wings feature one larger engine on each side that splits in two when s-foils are locked in attack position. The makeover for these T-70 model starfighters doesn't stop there, with the old red/orange colour stripes replaced by blue flourishes. Then there's the elite 'Black Squadron' of T-70s, led by Oscar Isaac's enigmatic Poe Dameron. If Dameron is indeed "the best frickin' star pilot in the galaxy", as Isaac memorably claimed, then it's only fair he gets his own signature ship. His X-wing features the new engine configuration, a distinctive orange and black paint job and, best of all, a spot for BB-8 in the back where an R2 unit would traditionally go. While the most recent trailer shows Dameron next to his trusty vehicle, as he passes by Finn (John Boyega) earlier footage shows him flying a standard blue and grey X-wing, which would imply either an upgrade or that beautiful winged machine is (gulp) destroyed.



REY'S SPEEDER

We don't even know her last name – yet – but what is clear is that to aid her work scavenging wreckages, Rey (Daisy Ridley) scoots around her home planet, the desert outpost Jakku, on a speeder. Offering up a clear echo of Luke Skywalker and his Tatooine landspeeder in *A New Hope*, Rey's vehicle is similarly rust-coloured and crudely fashioned. Still, the upright design is somewhat less family-friendly. Made for a single traveller, you clearly won't be fitting your Droids in the back. Talking of nippy vehicles, fans of *Return Of The Jedi's* Imperial Speeder Bikes will also be heartened to know The First Order – risen from the ashes of The Empire – has commandeered their own.



MILLENNIUM FALCON

Lando managed to knock the Falcon's radar dish off during the assault on the second Death Star, but the round dish of old has been replaced by a neat rectangular version for *The Force Awakens*. The hunk of junk has also had a bit of paint job, with red livery now to be found across the top of the hull. And, judging by the recent trailer, the hyperdrive is in good working order – with the ship clearly able to make the jump to hyper space.

Most importantly, it seems that Han Solo and Chewbacca have been away from their ship for some time if Han's declaration of "Chewie, we're home" is anything to go by.

KYLO REN'S COMMAND SHUTTLE

First glimpsed in *Return Of The Jedi*, the Lambda-class T-4a shuttle, better known as the Imperial Shuttle, makes a return in *The Force Awakens*. Judging by its impressive wide stabilisers it belongs to The First Order's villainous Darth Vader fanboy Kylo Ren. No surprise there, given Vader used one to zip between the incomplete Death Star and the moon on Endor.

COMPETITION



WIN!

A BB-8 DROID

To celebrate the release of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, we are giving readers the chance to win one of five BB-8 droids by Sphero.

With this gadget you can design a route for BB-8 and control from your smart device. You can also create and send holographic videos.

BB-8 will learn to recognise your voice, and adapt personality as you interact.

Who wouldn't want one?

All you have to do to be in with a chance of owning one of these remarkable gadgets is answer the following question:

WHAT EPISODE IS STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS?

A. VII

B. VI

C. IV

ENTER ONLINE NOW FOR FREE AT

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By taking part you agree to be bound by the Competition Rules. Open to UK and Republic of Ireland residents aged 18 and over. The closing date is 11:59pm on 31 December 2015 (GMT). Five winners drawn at random from the correct entries will be entitled to one BB-8 droid each. Specification may vary from pictured model. Only one entry per household; multiple entries will be disqualified. No cash equivalent. See www.futurecomps.co.uk/competition-rules for full terms and conditions.

Note: BB-8 is controlled by a smartphone app, which is available on Android and iOS. You are responsible for ensuring that BB-8 is compatible with your phone.

THE WILD BUNCH

Screaming fugitives, snow blizzards, Samuel L. Jackson...
Quentin Tarantino takes Total Film behind the scenes of
his next western, apocalyptic potboiler **The Hateful Eight**.

WORDS JANE CROWTHER



It's a mystery. You have to find out who the bad guys are," grins Quentin Tarantino, chatting to *Total Film* about his blustery, brilliantly bonkers-looking latest film, *The Hateful Eight*.

"Don't just jump to conclusions," he warns.

Set almost entirely inside a Wyoming stagecoach ranch – Minnie's Haberdashery – and starring a who's who of Tarantino's previous collaborators, it's the director's second western after 2012's Oscar-nominated 'southern', *Django Unchained*. Exclusively talking *Total Film* through the film's production ahead of its roadshow tour, Tarantino shares concept art and wild tales from the set of his eighth feature. But he has to be a little cagey... "I can't talk too in-depth about these guys," he cautions, "it's like *Ten Little Indians*. You're only supposed to know what you know, and then you find out during the course of it..."

IN THE DIRECTOR'S SEAT

"The idea of shooting in 70mm was to give the film a big, epic look, and since it's a pretty claustrophobic movie, that really opens it up. I actually think you can use 70mm for more than just shooting mountain ranges or landscapes of Saudi Arabia. It actually makes claustrophobic pieces more intimate, more in your face. There is a quality to this movie that's semi-similar to *Reservoir Dogs*. They're all in a warehouse in that one, and no one can trust anybody, and there's the haberdashery in this one, and no one can trust anybody. The set that we built, it was on a completely empty spot of land. It was this one big ranch in Colorado that this rancher owned, and all his stuff – his ranch and everything – was down on the bottom of a hill that you don't see in this movie. The area we had was just a completely open range, and it had these beautiful mountains in the background."



SETTING THE SCENE

"The concept art was done by my production designer, Yohei Taneda. The image outside during the snow is his artistic concept of how the haberdashery would look in a big wide shot with the snow, the mountains behind it, the barn on one side, and Minnie's [*Haberdashery*] on another, as the stagecoach is pulling up to it.

The inside of the stable was what we had talked about, because there were a couple of things that took place inside of there. This gives us an idea of how the light would come into the place, the open doorway area there, and just kind of a general artistic rendering of what it would look like."



HAVING A SCREAM

"The thing about our fugitive, Daisy Domergue, is she's kind of an impossible character to audition for, because you really have to play Daisy from beginning to end, you have to commit to being her every day. Jennifer Jason Leigh came in and she was really good. There was this one scene where she's got to scream. So we're just sitting on the couch and we're reading the scene, and actresses have come in and they've kind of sort of screamed, or screamed half-heartedly, or they don't even scream at all, because they feel embarrassed. It came time for Jennifer to do it, and she let out this blood-curdling scream. We were doing it at my house. I was like, 'Oh my God, my neighbours...' That was very, very impressive. In the '90s, in the industry, we looked at Jennifer Jason Leigh like she was the female Sean Penn. You almost didn't go and see Jennifer Jason Leigh movies, you went to see the performance she'd give in them. Stuff like *Georgia* or *Mrs Parker And The Vicious Circle*. It was about the performance. That's what I needed for Daisy. I realised I hadn't seen her do that kind of work in a bit. So I got very excited about [it]. She's really small, but she can handle herself with these guys. And she did. She won all their respect."



ROTH RETURNS

"It's nice to have Tim Roth back. I know he made his reputation in *Made In Britain* as a skinhead lad, but I love it when he plays posh. He does it with such contemptible relish, so it was a chance to literally let him rip in that way, and boy did he ever. Actually, sometimes when you ask British actors to do stuff like that, or even asking fancy American actors to do stuff like that, you don't get this one posh guy; you get the greatest hits of all the great British character actors of all time depending on the moment. If you look at Dustin Hoffman's performance in *Hook*, he's basically just every British actor he's ever liked. At one moment he's Lionel Jeffries, and one moment he's this guy over here, and one moment he's James Robertson Justice. But Tim wasn't all over the place like that. Tim was one guy. Tim is Terry Thomas in this movie. It's a lovely tribute to Terry Thomas."

A TERRIBLE TWOSOME

"Even though they're kind of antagonists, Daisy and bounty hunter John Ruth are almost a team. Jennifer and Kurt Russell have to work together constantly because they're chained together through the entire movie. So they had to really get along. Not only did they get along, it was really cool because even without me, they worked out little things, little dance moves, where they would get hung up on the chain. 'OK, look, I'm going to go over here, but that means you're going to have to unwind yourself like a yo-yo when I do this.' And they worked all that stuff out before we got there, before we started shooting the scene. So they had little routines completely worked out. I was like, 'Oh wow, that's great. OK, do that!'"



Chain reaction: bounty hunter John Ruth (Kurt Russell) and fugitive Daisy Domergue (Jennifer Jason Leigh).

BE COOL

"They say in Iceland there's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing. We were working in Colorado, and if you talked to the crew, they would say the snow was difficult. It was difficult, but it wasn't too difficult. It was fun. We were all kind of doing the same thing. It was hard work, and there were days that were definitely harder than others – especially in some of the locations we had to get to; we literally had to be sledded up on ropes, but it was all really worth it. When the snow actually fell, we were all really excited, and everyone pitched in to get as many shots done when the weather was perfect. It did require me to work differently than I have before, to try and keep the snow consistent. We were unable to be precious about any scene. We kept moving until we finished it. If we're shooting Major Warren being held at gunpoint by Kurt Russell's character, John Ruth, in front of the stagecoach, and we shoot Major Warren's side, and there's snow falling down and stuff; we might not get to shoot Kurt Russell's side until three weeks or four weeks later, because we've got to wait until the snow's falling like that again. We used fake snow during the blizzard, because we wouldn't be able to shoot inside of a blizzard, but for the most part that's real snow, and you can tell. That's what we were trying to get – you know, snowfall during a scene. It almost had that kind of magical quality."



Blizzard bother: Samuel L. Jackson as Major Warren; (clockwise from right) Michael Madsen has a rest; Jackson arms up; travelling by stagecoach.



GOING WEST

"There can't help but be a link between *Django Unchained* and *The Hateful Eight*, because both films qualify as a western. I'd never done a western before *Django*. I think you need to make three westerns before you can officially call yourself a western director, so if I do a third, then I will officially be a western director. But I'm very happy with this one. It's very different from *Django*, but you can tell the same guy did it. As different as it is, it also stands right beside it, too, and they go hand in hand. *The Hateful Eight* is a serious comment on the Civil War, to some degree. I've watched the film a couple of different times. At the end of one of the screenings, I remember thinking, 'Wow, this could almost be a post-apocalyptic film, in one way or another.' Instead of an Australian outback, it's just a snowy wasteland, and these are the survivors of the apocalypse. The apocalypse has ruined their lives and torn apart their society. So the survivors are surviving in Minnie's Haberdashery, but the apocalypse is the Civil War. That's what's destroyed their lives, and that's what has destroyed their society, so to speak. So they're all huddled in Minnie's Haberdashery, blaming each other for the apocalypse."



TAKING THE MICHAEL

"In this picture, Michael Madsen's lying on Minnie's bed. He's the only one presumptuous enough to actually lie down on the bed in the movie. Well, Michael's Michael. He comes with his own interesting energy. He's an interesting camera subject. He's a very interesting actor in that regard. He reminds me very much of a lot of the cool mannered actors of the '60s that I was a big fan of. One of the things about Michael that's really, really cool is a lot of people say that they're drawn to acting because they're kids and they like playing make-believe, like playing cowboys and Indians and stuff. Michael has always stayed in touch with that childlike quality of make-believe. He's really cool about being the Indian, or he's really cool about being the cowboy, and he wants the cowboy to be cool. There's just this real childlike 'kid at play' quality when Michael acts, that it's really fun, and it's just really, really refreshing. It's not overthought. It truly is make-believe."



HITTING THE ROAD

"The whole idea behind the *Hateful Eight* roadshow version is it's a throwback idea. That's how they did the roadshow version in the past. There was an overture, there was an intermission, and there were usually about six or 10 minutes more in the roadshow version. I don't think of it like a director's cut or anything. I kind of think of it like this: the regular theatrical version of the movie, that's the movie. That's the movie that's playing in 3,000 theatres. Then there's the roadshow version. If you're buying a ticket to the roadshow version, you're mine. You bought the ticket in advance. That's what you're doing tonight. You're going to the opera. You're going to see *La Bobème*. You're going to see *The Iceman Cometh* on Broadway. And you're mine. You're not trying to squeeze in dinner. This is what you're doing tonight. I've got you. You're mine, and you get a programme and you see the movie in 70mm and it has the intermission and it has the overture and it has a little more breadth to it. You're giving yourself over to me. And this is my version of that ride."

ASSEMBLING THE RANKS

"Because the film's so dialogue-oriented, I euphemistically said, 'Oh, I need to do this with a Tarantino superstar that knows how to say my dialogue well.' So that was the kind of order of the day. For the most part, I had a lot of the roles cast as I was writing it. I was writing it for Michael. I was writing for Kurt and Samuel L. Jackson. But also, there was something about this film that seemed just a touch of a throwback to the '90s to some degree, and actors that kind of emerged in the '90s seemed like the right order for this movie." **TF**

The Hateful Eight opens on 8 January 2016.

Reflections

What a difference a decade makes. Ten years ago, Angelina Jolie was just an Oscar-winning actress, the daughter of a Hollywood star and a Lara Croft pin-up. Then she really got famous.

Taking on Doug Liman's espionage caper *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*, it introduced her to a then-married Brad Pitt. After his marriage to Jennifer Aniston ended, Brangelina was born – and Jolie became arguably the most recognisable woman on the planet. But you knew all that, right?

Such is the fervent interest in the soap opera of Jolie's life – births, adoptions, surgeries, relief work – it's almost easy to overlook the career. In the intervening decade, among other things, she's worked with Clint Eastwood (*Changeling*) and Robert De Niro (*The Good Shepherd*), turned in a massive *Maleficent*-shaped hit and carved out the beginnings of a credible directorial career – with Bosnian war drama *In The Land Of Blood And Honey* and 2014's WW2-set survival tale *Unbroken*.

What she hasn't done is reunite on screen with Pitt – until now. Her third film in the director's chair, *By The Sea* is undoubtedly her most personal. Set in the '70s, she and Pitt play a fractured couple – Vanessa, a former dancer, and Roland, a writer, who are travelling through France on holiday in a last-ditch effort to save their marriage. But if you think she's trying to tell us something, shortly before shooting in Malta last August, she and Pitt tied the knot. "We didn't have a honeymoon," she smiles. "This was our honeymoon! Which is very strange."

Jolie-Pitt, as she now officially is known, is sitting on a hotel suite sofa, her slim-line frame swaddled in a beige cardigan. She turned 40 back in June; though making *By The Sea* had already put her in the sort of reflective mood that crossing such milestones usually brings about. "I think it just was that time, when we were feeling like we wanted to be together more. We just wanted to not go through this life [on] different projects. [We thought] 'Let's try to be closer, let's try to have a deeper love and a deeper understanding of each other, and let's go further.' It all came together at once."

It meant directing herself for the first time, which she didn't enjoy. "I don't like seeing myself on camera, which made it very difficult. But I wanted to be able to have this experience with him." Those feline-like green eyes flash >>

Ten years on from *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*, Angelina Jolie again stars with – and this time directs – Brad Pitt. She tells Total Film why marital-drama *By The Sea* is her most personal and exposing film... WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM

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briefly at the memory. "This script sat on my desk for years and we used to just call it 'that crazy one!' – and then one day we decided we should just do it. We were hesitating for all the wrong reasons [*and we realised*] we should just play and be free and learn about each other."

Even so, taking on *By The Sea* was hardly advisable. Not a week goes by without some tabloid speculating on the state of the Jolie-Pitt union. Digging into issues of marital strife could go one of two ways: catharsis or crisis. "Going into it, a lot of our friends thought it was maybe not the greatest idea," Jolie admits. "Because they knew that it was a very intense film about two people that are very at odds – and that's going to bring up certain kinds of tensions. Even though what the characters are experiencing, what their personal problems are, are not our problems."

Oddly, *Mr. & Mrs. Smith* broached the same topic, with its husband and wife characters unaware each other is a spy. As Jolie unwittingly told *TF* back in 2004 before she made it: "It's about marriage, which is interesting because he has a great one and I have had some

bad experiences." Oh, the irony. Naturally, you might assume she's referring to her earlier marriages – to actors Jonny Lee Miller (with whom she starred in her cyber-punk 1995 breakthrough *Hackers*) and Billy Bob Thornton (her *Pushing Tin* co-star). Both came in her more rebellious phase (drugs, knives, blood – the usual), when she was seen as a Hollywood live-wire – a force of energy that occasionally spilled onto the screen in films like *Gia* and *Girl, Interrupted*, for which she claimed a Best Supporting Actress Oscar. But arguably, her 'bad experiences' also refer to her upbringing, when her womanising actor-father Jon Voight separated from her mother when Jolie was two – a fact that led her estrangement from him.

Unquestionably, *By The Sea* allowed her to tackle marriage head-on with Pitt. "We both pushed each other pretty far in this," she says. "I know I'm biased but I think his performance is very strong. It's very emotional. It was just so different. We'd never been in these kind of moments together with these kind of intense scenes with such deep emotions. You have to... You go through something when you go through a heavier drama." Scenes of the couple

fighting left her spent. "It is one of the strangest things to direct your husband to fight with you!"

Her ambition, she said, was to create a film that didn't resolve neatly or offer easy answers. "Especially as an artist, there's so much that comes out today – and a lot of the films I'm in! – where you feel you have to adjust to an audience. You wrap them up a little cleaner." It's why she set it in the '70s, a reminder of the bygone era of more confrontational films that weren't made by committee. "Some people will love it, I hope, and some people will hate it, but that's OK. That's what art should be."

While *By The Sea* will no doubt send Brangelina watchers into overdrive, it's about far more than just her thoughts on marriage. "I wrote it years ago with the thought that, 'I want to understand grief and loss,'" she explains. Much of this has to do with her mother, Marcheline Bertrand, who died of ovarian cancer in 2007. With a history of cancer in her family – both her grandmother and aunt also lost their lives to the disease – Jolie wanted to explore the theme of "being out of control and not feeling complete" when she penned *By The Sea*.

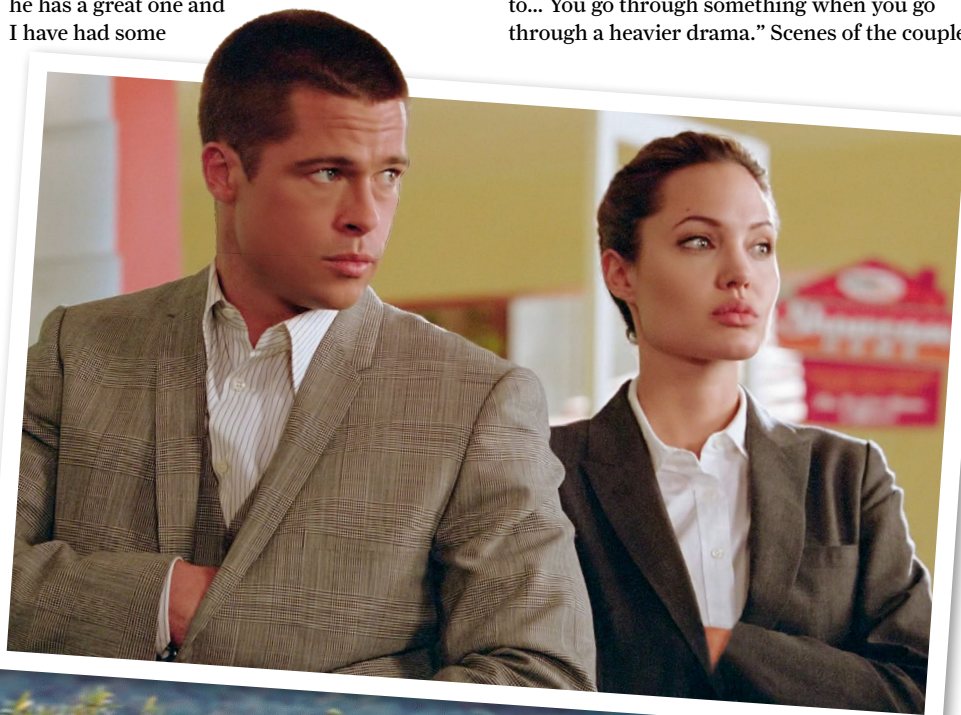
With the BRCA1 gene – which dramatically raises the risk of ovarian and breast cancer – prevalent in the maternal side of her family, two years ago Jolie had a preventative double mastectomy. "I wrote it years before I went through certain things, then during the film,

'It's strange to direct your husband to fight with you'

I was imagining certain things that my mother went through and certain feelings that a woman goes through, and then when I was in the editing room, I got the call that I might have cancer – while I was in the edit of the film, exploring the pain."

Told by doctors that she also had a 50 per cent risk of developing ovarian cancer, Jolie suspended post-production and underwent further surgery. With her ovaries and fallopian tubes removed, it all makes *By The Sea* a very curious art-imitating-life-imitating-art movie. "It's been a very strange experience, very cathartic at the end of the day," Jolie nods. "But it feels very personal. That's the only reason of being slightly shy of putting it out. There are certain things that just feel very exposing."

Still, Jolie has never been one to hold back. "I don't want to be somebody who thinks about what they say and censors it," she says. She doesn't come with a huge entourage nor does



Tomb rider: Jolie as gun-toting adventurer Lara Croft and (above) with Brad Pitt in *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*.



The Eight Stages Of Ang

TF charts the life-changing decade that changed Jolie from Brad co-star to Dame.



2005

'Brangelina' meet in the lead roles of box-office smash *Mr & Mrs Smith*.

2007

Jolie's beloved mother, Marcheline Bertrand, dies, informing many of her personal and professional choices.



2010

Originally written for a man, Jolie is such a star that *Salt* changes gender for her.



2011

Makes her drama directorial debut with positively-reviewed, if little-seen, *In The Land Of Blood And Honey*.

2012

After years as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador, Jolie is promoted to Special Envoy. She now has diplomatic clout.

2013

Jolie publicly discusses her double mastectomy and further procedures to out-run hereditary cancer, gaining admiration and creating awareness.



2014

Box office glory with *Maleficent*, directorial Oscar buzz with *Unbroken* and stratospheric fame with marriage to Pitt.



2014

Appointed an honorary Dame Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George for services to UK foreign policy on putting an end to sexual violence in war zones.

PA IMAGES/KOBAL

Strife lessons: with Pitt in new movie *By The Sea* and (below) in the title role of Disney's *Maleficent*.

she live near Hollywood. She, Pitt and their six children – adoptees Maddox, 14, Pax, 11 and Zahara, 10; and biological-born Shiloh Nouvel, 9 and 7-year-old twins Knox and Vivienne – now spend much of their time in Europe.

"I love it for the children," she says. "It's a very different mindset. A lot of the young people I know here have had their gap year and gone to Africa. It's different and it's lovely. And for us, it means we're closer to go down to Europe, go to Africa, go across to Asia..." These aren't luxury jaunts to five-star resorts. Even before Jolie met Pitt, she was pursuing humanitarian efforts as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador, inspired by her time in Cambodia filming videogame adaptation *Tomb Raider*.

Jolie campaigns on everything from legislation to aid child immigrants to stopping sexual violence against women in military conflict zones. In 2013, she was recognised with an honorary Oscar – the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award; it was one of the rare times, she says, that she's accepted such recognition. "Often I decline... [simply] because I feel like it's a privilege and a pleasure to work with refugees."

It's changed her life entirely – even her social circle. "My friends are mostly field officers from UNHCR!" she laughs, noting that journalist Marianne Pearl – whom she played in Michael Winterbottom's *A Mighty Heart* – remains one of her "closest" confidantes now. "I've always felt that I would just go where I was needed. And I felt for many years I could be a voice for refugees and I could bring awareness." But would she ever consider entering into politics? "It's not my plan to but I want to see things change."

Talk inevitably turns to the recent refugee crisis in Syria, something Jolie has been expecting to happen for some time. Simply dealing with the migration of thousands of Syrians is not enough, she says. "If we are dealing with it, piece by piece, with band-aids, and just responding to headlines, then we are not addressing all of the issues that lead to this crisis." Her voice rises, full of fire. "You cannot answer global crisis with aid relief and you need a different kind of leadership [to the one] that has been present for a very, very long time."

Already Jolie is in pre-production on her next directorial effort. She's been in Cambodia scouting locations for a Netflix-produced adaptation of Loung Ung's memoir *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter Of Cambodia Remembers*, set in the time of the Khmer Rouge. "The last film done on that war was *The Killing Fields* – and it was shot in Thailand. This particular story is staying with the Cambodian family and it's through their perspective." Jolie is producing with Maddox – his first experience of bringing a movie to fruition.

Making it with a Cambodian cast, Jolie predicts it'll be "complicated" but she wouldn't have it any other way.

"I do like to be scared. It's good in life to do things that scare you... I think that's what we should be doing in life." You can't fault her ambition. "I feel

I have a lot to learn. And so if I can do different types of films, it helps me to study different ways of filmmaking. I'm a student as I go through this." So fear brings good things with it? "Always," she smiles. "It has to." **TF**

By The Sea opens on 11 December.

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BOSTON ILLEGAL

Johnny Depp finally returns to form as notorious Boston criminal-turned-FBI informant Whitey Bulger. Total Film interrogates the cast about brutal gangster pic **Black Mass**...

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM

Johnny Depp is recalling his first day on set of *Black Mass*, playing real-life Boston mobster James 'Whitey' Bulger. "I got looks," he says, sitting opposite *Total Film* in a London hotel in ripped denim, boots and open-necked shirt. "The first time I walked out of my trailer, done up as Jimmy Bulger, I got these looks on the street." Sporting slicked-back hair, piercing blue eyes, Aviator sunnies, white T-shirt and black leather jacket, Depp's transformation struck a nerve. "Associates of his were initially pretty freaked out."

It's hardly surprising, given most probably thought they'd never see Whitey again. A ruthless mobster who ruled the Boston underworld in the 1970s and '80s, Bulger is 83 years old now, serving two life terms plus five years in a Florida penitentiary after being found guilty on 31 counts, including involvement in 11 murders. "He was an extremely notorious figure in Boston," admits *Black Mass* director Scott Cooper (*Out Of The Furnace*). "For those people in South Boston who suffered under Whitey Bulger, it's going to be a real shock."

Fans of Depp are likely to be equally taken aback. His post-*Pirates* career has been mired with flops like *The Tourist*, *The Lone Ranger* and *Mortdecai*. But Bulger is a comeback of epic proportions: callous and cold-hearted, this "tightrope walk" makes Depp's previous forays into the crime genre – gangster John Dillinger in *Public Enemies*, coke dealer George Jung in *Blow* and the titular undercover FBI agent in *Donnie Brasco* – look schoolyard-tame by comparison.

When Bulger's attorney J.W. Carney visited the set, he used words like "chilling" to describe the effect of seeing Depp recreate his most famous client. "Your blood goes cold when you look at the man," concurs his British co-star Benedict Cumberbatch. Far removed from his "extremely

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soft-spoken and gentle” self, as his director puts it, such is the power of Depp’s disappearing act, when Cooper screened a print of *Black Mass* at Warner Bros, an unwitting projectionist asked, ‘Who’s that playing Whitey?’

The physical aspects were essential. “I don’t think anyone could’ve gone out there and played Bulger without ‘finding’ him,” says Depp. “We worked from the outside in.” Collaborating with make-up artist Joel Harlow, who previously turned him into Jack Sparrow in *Pirates Of The Caribbean*, the 52-year-old actor spent weeks perfecting the look before he even showed Cooper, experimenting with prosthetics, stained teeth, hand-painted blue contacts (for that icy killer stare) and a receding hairline.

While Depp’s outward appearance is shocking – even distracting, initially – it’s just the start. Depp absorbed stories about Bulger’s personality, says Joel Edgerton, who plays FBI agent John Connolly, a childhood friend of Bulger’s from ‘Southie’ – the working-class Irish-Catholic neighbourhood in South Boston that forms the film’s evocative backdrop. The real triumph, he says, is showing “the way he operated, how still and silent he was, [how] venal and coiled. The calm before the storm was a really malevolent force that he had.”

While the film doesn’t hold back on violence, one dinner-party scene at Connolly’s house shows Bulger at his most simmering – as he turns on a dime in a seemingly innocuous discussion about a secret family recipe. “He could be charming, cunning, chilling and deadly... all within a matter of seconds,” says Cooper. A show of force was simply all part of the business. “The language of his work was violence,” shrugs Depp. “It was the only way to stay on top.”

After his redneck-country tale *Out Of The Furnace*, it was clear Cooper had no plan to



Bacon buttress: Kevin Bacon is one of many big supporting players cast as FBI agents.

compromise the film’s edgier moments. “Anybody who gets in business with me understands that I have an unflinching eye for violence,” he says. “And I do for important reasons. We live in an extremely violent world... But I never want to glamorise or have the violence feel gratuitous. It’s important to me that it’s portrayed realistically.”

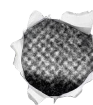
Still, feared or fêted by locals, there’s more to Bulger than bloodshed. During an early spell in jail, he subjected himself to LSD experiments to commute his sentence. “And they say that didn’t have an adverse effect on the man,” laughs an incredulous Cooper. Then there was the time he and three associates won the lottery – sharing a \$14.3 million pot from a ticket bought from a liquor store controlled by Bulger. Was it genuine? “Let’s just say he collected his winnings.”

Then there are his blood ties. His brother is high-ranking politician William ‘Billy’ Bulger,

former President of the Massachusetts Senate. “There was this immediate suspicion that Billy had something to do with how his brother remained untouchable,” says Cumberbatch, who plays Billy. “Personally, I remain more and more convinced that he didn’t; it’s just this extraordinary story of a family who produced two brothers, with political polarity... and that’s equally fascinating and equally Shakespearean.”

Did Billy know of his brother’s activities? “It’s definitely not for me as a silly actor to comment on it, beyond what the Warner Bros lot have decided to show and not show,” says Cumberbatch,

‘EVERYONE PULLED THEIR HEARTS RIGHT OUT OF THEIR CHESTS’ JOHNNY DEPP



cautiously. “I think it’s subtly done, as it was very subtle in their lives.” Referring to the time when Whitey went on the lam for 16 years before he was finally caught in 2011, Depp differs: “I’ll step out on the plank... I think that it’s likely. I couldn’t imagine it any other way... my instinct tells me they would’ve spoken.”

Yet most shocking of all was the deal Bulger pulled with Connolly, who convinced his old friend to turn informant – a situation Whitey soon turned to his advantage, as he began using the Feds to eliminate rival gangsters, allowing him “to operate with impunity”, as Cooper puts it. “In a way, it was made to look worse than it was,” says Depp, who spent time combing through Bulger’s surprisingly slim FBI case file.



Under cover: Depp consults with director Scott Cooper during a break in filming.

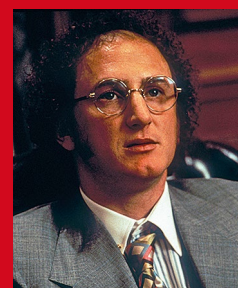
EXTREME MAKEOVERS

When actors disappear into roles...



JOHN HURT
(JOHN MERRICK,
THE ELEPHANT MAN)

Buried beneath latex with soul poking out... Hurt rightfully received a Best Actor Oscar nomination.



SEAN PENN
(KLEINFELD,
CARLITO'S WAY)

Then a moody movie pin-up, Penn permed his hair and shaved himself a receding hairline.



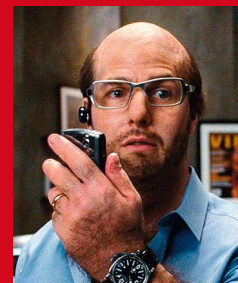
CHARLIZE THERON
(AILEEN WUORNOS,
MONSTER)

Former model Theron added 30lbs and prosthetic teeth to become serial killer Wuornos.



CHRISTIAN BALE
(TREVOR REZNIK,
THE MACHINIST)

Bale dropped 63lbs to become a soul-sad industrial worker who's not slept for a year.



TOM CRUISE
(LES GROSSMAN,
TROPIC THUNDER)

Fat suit, bald head, huge hands, dance moves, rampant swearing... Cruise goes all the way. **JG**



Home discomforts: Dakota Johnson plays Bulger's wife Lindsey and (below) Jesse Plemons as enforcer Kevin Weeks.

"He definitely did some things that one wouldn't really approve of... I don't know. I never saw him as a rat but I guess I couldn't."

Already, Depp has been on the receiving end of criticism for comments made at the film's Boston premiere. "There's a kind heart in there," he said. "There's a cold heart in there. There's a man who loves. There's a man who cries. There's a lot to the man." It left Bill St. Croix, brother to Deborah Hussey, one of Bulger's victims, apoplectic. "I wonder how Johnny Depp would feel if his sister got strangled and buried in the basement with two other corpses? There's nothing humane about Jimmy Bulger."

Depp felt it was crucial to show Bulger as multi-faceted: a committed brother, son and father, who was well-liked in Southie; a Robin Hood figure even known for carrying old ladies' groceries.

"I thought the more interesting way to approach the guy was not as a gangster, not as a criminal, but as a guy who did have those very strong familial ties. He was always very close with his brother, with his mom, he was very generous to the elderly in the neighbourhood, to the kids... all that stuff."

Others have questioned the film's accuracy. In particular, Kevin Weeks, Bulger's right-hand man, who, according to Depp, "was out on the periphery [of the shoot], looking from a distance." Played by *Breaking Bad*'s Jesse



Plemons, Weeks disliked his own depiction as a "knuckle-dragging moron", dismissing an early scene where he gets pummelled as a fabrication. Likewise, he claimed, the showing of another Bulger cohort Steve 'The Rifleman' Flemmi (played by Rory Cochrane) as rather meek was false. "Stevie was a psychopath."

Cooper, on board after Barry Levinson and Jim Sheridan both backed out, claims he undertook "a great deal of research". With the script based on 2001's *Black Mass: The True Story Of An Unholy Alliance Between The FBI And The Irish Mob*, Cooper worked with the authors, *Boston Globe* reporters Dick Lehr and Gerard O'Neill. Pouring over real-life surveillance footage of his subject (some can be glimpsed in the credits), he also met with Fred Wyshak, the Federal prosecutor who ultimately brought down Bulger and his so-called Winter Hill Gang.

Others took a different approach. Edgerton reports that Rory Cochrane ingratiated himself into Southie society. "Every fucking spare moment he had, [Rory] was down in South Boston, going into all the bars that had the shamrock out the front, and meeting

people, talking to people. And he found his way very quickly to certain people who knew the players in the story. I would tag along, Jesse would tag along, but Rory led the charge... he's almost part of the furniture down there now."

Edgerton also spent time with an FBI agent who knew Connolly. "He said that John was whoever he

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In office: Benedict Cumberbatch plays politician Billy Bulger and (below) James Bulger is embroiled in the Boston Irish community.



needed to be with whoever he was with, which I think is true of all people. But when you think about the different worlds that John had to navigate, he had to be a real shape-shifter." Increasingly lured into the mob lifestyle, Connolly was also a peacock. "That was such a great image, when you see him there with his gold jewellery and his expensive suits. He started to take on this aura of [mobster] John Gotti."

The nub of *Black Mass* is the Connolly-Bulger relationship – the “doomed love affair” as Cooper calls it. When Whitey was serving time in Alcatraz for bank robbery, Connolly was sent back to Boston by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover to clean up the Italian Mafia – until hubris brought him down. “But what’s really fascinating about Connolly,” adds the director, “is that he really lives by the South Boston code: these bonds of loyalty.” When Whitey’s gang began to rat him out, Connolly was the only one not to give evidence – a silence that cost him 40 years in jail.

While Edgerton comes close to stealing the film, *Black Mass*’ strength lies in its ensemble. Dakota Johnson as Bulger’s wife Lindsey; Corey Stoll, Kevin Bacon and Adam Scott as various FBI members; Juno Temple as aforementioned victim Hussey; Peter Sarsgaard as coke-fiend Brian Halloran and *Boardwalk Empire*’s Julianne Nicholson as Connolly’s wife Marianne. “Hopefully people will look back and go, ‘Look at that cast!’” marvels Edgerton. “In the way I look back at *The Outsiders*, and go, ‘How the fuck did they know?’”



He attributes the collective strength of the cast to Cooper, a former actor who, remarkably, steered Jeff Bridges to his first Oscar with his 2009 debut feature, country music drama *Crazy Heart*. “I don’t really know how he does it, but with a certain ease and grace, he gets really good performances out of already good actors.” He remembers *Out Of The Furnace*, watching Christian Bale and Casey Affleck excel in another violent sibling tale. “I knew in that moment, if I get a chance to work with Scott, I’ll take that opportunity.”

Complementing *Black Mass*’ performances are the marvellously muted visuals. Shooting on film, in a misty grey palette influenced by the work of photographer Joel Sternfeld, Cooper didn’t want a film drenched in darkness. “I spent time driving around Boston in three different seasons, looking at how the light would shine off the Mystic River in the warehouse district. Whitey Bulger would oftentimes kill people in broad daylight. He was very brazen.”

Citing films like Francis Ford Coppola’s *The Conversation* and John Cassavetes’ *The Killing Of A Chinese Bookie* as influential, Cooper told his cinematographer Masanobu Takayanagi and his production designer Stefania Cella that it was critical they approached *Black Mass* as if they were making it in the ‘70s. As for the decade’s typical over-the-top costumes and colours, “I wanted them to completely recede into the background.”

The result left Depp flawed. “Everyone pulled it right out,” he says. “They pulled their hearts right out of their chests.” Whether the Academy will agree is another matter – the violence may make voters balk. But surely the performances merit recognition? “Johnny is remarkable,” agrees Cooper. “As is Joel, as is Benedict, Dakota, Julianne and on and on, down the line.” He’s just elated by this perfect storm. “In a very sincere way, this is the film I set out to make.” **TF**

***Black Mass* opens on 27 November.**

FROM GREY TO BLACK

Revealing different shades of **Dakota Johnson**.



How did you approach *Black Mass*?

This is the first actual real woman I've ever played, so there is an amount of information that is available to you to mould the character. And also if you're lucky enough to have physical footage, you can study mannerisms. Which is a bit different to creating something out of thin air.

Was there much you could find on Lindsey?

I gathered as much as I could from the Internet and what Scott [Cooper] and I discussed. There were a few things I couldn't get because there wasn't anything that was written personally about [Whitey and Lindsey's] relationship. So it was hard to try and... it's always difficult when people are real. You want it to be accurate but at the same time you want it to fit into the story. It was our version, our telling of those characters.

How was it to work with Johnny Depp?

He's just really a phenomenal actor and a truly gifted artist. And just the man.

The film is set in Boston. Were you familiar with the area?

Well, I grew up in the mountains really. I was in Colorado. That's where I belong. I prefer the

mountains! My childhood I spent outdoors riding horses. It's the most comfortable place for me. I grew up travelling. I grew up on sets. I grew up going to new places. And I like it all.

What is it that draws you to a character?

It depends. Sometimes I just get excited and then I stick with it. I become obsessed with stories or events or people or personalities. Characters that are thought-provoking. I find it difficult to find a common theme in all of my characters. I haven't figured it out yet. My body of work isn't that substantial yet.

How did you decompress after *Fifty Shades Of Grey*?

I'm trying to think. It came out in February. Where are we now? Wow – it feels like a lifetime ago. I feel like I've been five different people since then. What did I do afterwards? I was working – I kept going. The night that I hosted *Saturday Night Live* was the end of promoting the movie... and then.. I think I blacked it out. I went into an emotional void!

Your mother, Melanie Griffith, famously said she didn't want to see *Fifty Shades*. But do you talk to your parents about work?

Sometimes. I keep it separate but I want them to see *Black Mass*. **JM**

DAN THE MAN

He's consolidating his post-Potter stardom with mature roles in *Victor Frankenstein* and *Now You See Me 2* but the genial **Daniel Radcliffe** is also keeping a sharp eye on Harry spin-offs and his own ego. As he tells *Total Film*, no-one likes a diva...

Words Jamie Graham *Portraits* Pal Hansen *Grooming* Lindsay Brown *Styling* Jared Green
Blazer/shirt Adrien Sauvage *T-shirt* Saint Laurent *Pocket square* Tom Ford
Location Clementi House, April 1 2015



just don't want to be an arsehole," says Daniel Radcliffe. "I don't know how else to explain it other than you see people who are arseholes, and you go, 'I don't want to be like that.'"

Radcliffe is pondering his reputation as one of the nicest guys in movies. Sitting in a hotel suite in Soho, London, he's dressed down in a striped t-shirt, blue jeans, trainers and ankle socks, his confessed tiredness camouflaged by some artfully applied makeup and a goofy grin. It's July. Tomorrow he'll be jetting off to Comic-Con in San Diego to promote gothic-horror *Victor Frankenstein*, and until a few days ago he was residing in New York to be with his girlfriend Erin Darke while she appeared in off-Broadway production *The Spoils* opposite Jesse Eisenberg, who wrote as well as starred. For now, though,



Yes, master: Radcliffe as Igor, shooting *Victor Frankenstein* on the UK coast.

'WHEN I FIRST MET MAGGIE SMITH, I WAS NINE AND I DIDN'T KNOW WHO SHE WAS. I WAS GLORIOUSLY UNINTIMIDATED'

he's enjoying being back in Blighty ("I'm watching *Pointless* and *Come Dine With Me* – all those important things about England").

Anyway, back to not being an arsehole. Or, indeed, any other parts of the anatomy...

"The actors who are dicks... I do not know how they enjoy their job," he continues. "Because if you step on set and the crew hates you, you must feel bad. I remember talking to somebody who looks after a very big actor. They were telling me these horror stories. I was like, 'At what point, in all this, does he have fun?' She said, 'Honestly, it's the moment he gets out on the red carpet and waves and

everyone chants and cheers.' I was like, 'That's the saddest fucking thing I've ever heard.'"

His laugh echoes around the room. "Having to do red carpets gives me anxiety. It's the most unnatural part of acting. The most natural part is being on set." So he's not the slightest bit jaded now that he has eight *Harry Potter* movies and numerous other projects under his belt? "Not at all. I got to work with Michael Caine earlier in the year in *Now You See Me 2*. He's 81 and he's not jaded. Also, I worked with Bill Paxton on [BBC movie] *The Gamechangers*. God knows how many fucking films he's done. He still just loves it.

That's what I want to be. The worst day on set is still the best day for most other jobs."

This last was true, he insists, even on the UK sets of *Victor Frankenstein*, an askew riff on Mary Shelley's classic novel that's stitched together from the literary source, various movie adaptations and screenwriter Max Landis' imagination as he posits an origin story for the eponymous scientist (James McAvoy) and his hunchbacked buddy Igor (Radcliffe). The weather was appalling, the action physical, the prosthetic effects gooey. But the 26-year-old actor loved every second of it, fuelled by the belief that director Paul McGuigan was offering a fresh, invigorating take. Attached since 2011, before McGuigan and then McAvoy came on board, Radcliffe witnessed the script evolve.

"My problem with the script, as it had been before, was that it was a little bit... and this isn't a criticism of Max because it's just something that some American writers do... they write English bad guys without having an edge; they sound a little verbose and moustache-twirly. As soon as I met Paul, I was like, 'OK, he's going to give it some grit and make it feel like it's [set] in a really scary world.'"

Key to this gritty, scary world is the shifting relationship between Frankenstein and Igor. Here, it's not as simple as master and minion or brainbox and birdbrain. And while the term 'bromance' has been bandied around – a description that makes Radcliffe roll his eyes theatrically – their affiliation is perhaps better characterised as co-dependent.

"There's an imbalance and that is the cause of a lot of the tension," nods Radcliffe. "It comes from the fact that at the beginning



Magic role: Radcliffe played boy wizard Harry Potter for 10 years.

of the film, he essentially rescues me [*from a circus*] and changes my life forever. So from the word go, I am indebted to him in his mind and in my own mind. As he starts going crazier and crazier, he begins doing things that I cannot endorse anymore, but I don't have the guts to stand up to him. That creates an unhappiness within me that eventually spills over into our relationship." Another big laugh ricochets off the walls. "It's an incredibly dysfunctional relationship."

There is, of course, no yin without yang, and Radcliffe was both delighted and terrified when McGuigan suggested that McAvoy should be their Frankenstein. "When Paul said, 'I'm going to go and talk to James about playing Victor' I was like, 'Yes! Go talk to James! Fuck's sake, what are you even doing here? Go!'" he grins, then offers passionate assurances that McGuigan's casting proved to be inspired: "What he brings to the character is *phenomenal*. He's fucking extraordinary in it."

But, rather sweetly given he's a global star who's worked with the likes of Gary Oldman, Alan Rickman and Pierce Brosnan, Radcliffe admits to being terrified at the thought of acting opposite the talented Scot. "I was much more in awe of James than I was, initially, with a lot of the senior actors on *Potter*," he insists. "When I first met Maggie Smith, I was nine and I did not know who Maggie Smith was! I had not seen *The Prime Of Miss Jean Brodie*. I was gloriously unintimidated by all of those people." He takes a breath. "But when I met James, I'd grown up watching *The Last King Of Scotland*. *Inside I'm Dancing* was a huge fucking film to me, and I remember being obsessed with *Atonement*. Suddenly you're working with him. That was very intimidating."

Thankfully the two got on famously and threw themselves, literally, into the scenes. If they weren't covered in mud they were knee-deep in blood as Frankenstein seeks to create monstrous life. Radcliffe doesn't want to give too much away but discloses that there is more than one creature in the movie.

He grins at *TF*. "There's a prototype monster that I particularly love. It's a hybrid of several creatures. Its name is Gordon and it's really fucking cool."

Born in Fulham on 23 July 1989 to literary agent Alan Radcliffe and casting agent Marcia Gresham, Daniel Jacob Radcliffe acted in school plays and landed his first TV gig as 'Young David' in BBC's mini-series *David Copperfield* (1999). His first film role came playing the son of Geoffrey Rush and Jamie Lee Curtis in John Boorman's elegant adaptation of John le Carré's spy thriller *The Tailor Of Panama* (2001), but it was his casting as the bespectacled boy wizard in *Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone* (also 2001) that changed everything. Watched >>

Blazer Gucci At Mr Porter
Shirt/trousers Adrien Sauvage



over by fretful parents who didn't want to lose their son to the filming of endless sequels, Radcliffe initially only committed to two movies, but *HPI*'s worldwide box office of \$974,755,371 sealed his future. Seven supersized sequels followed over the next 10 years, with the world and its dog watching little Dan grow up on screen.

Initially rather stiff but getting by on innate likeability and a winning grin, Radcliffe could also be seen growing into his craft, with his performances improving sequel by sequel until it began to look like he might have the tools to fashion a career beyond the mighty walls of Hogwarts. He prepared cleverly for just such a graduation, appearing in the West End revival of Peter Shaffer's *Equus* in 2007 (critics raved, once they'd finished writing about Harry Potter doing full frontal nudity – cue 'wand' gags aplenty) and a Broadway revival of *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* in 2011.

When the time finally came to fly the *Potter* nest, he soared: the scares worked in Hammer's gothic smash *The Woman In Black* because viewers cared for Radcliffe's young

lawyer Arthur Kipps, and his rendition of Beat poet Allen Ginsberg was electric in indie pic *Kill Your Darlings*. Less successful were romantic-drama *What If* with Zoe Kazan, and horror-fantasy *Horns*, based on the novel by Stephen King's son Joe Hill and directed by Alexandre Aja (*Switchblade Romance*, *Piranha 3D*). Even so, they were smart, eclectic choices, feeding into an interesting body of work that looks to utilise his star persona in engaging ways.

Radcliffe's on his way, but at 26 his journey has only just begun.

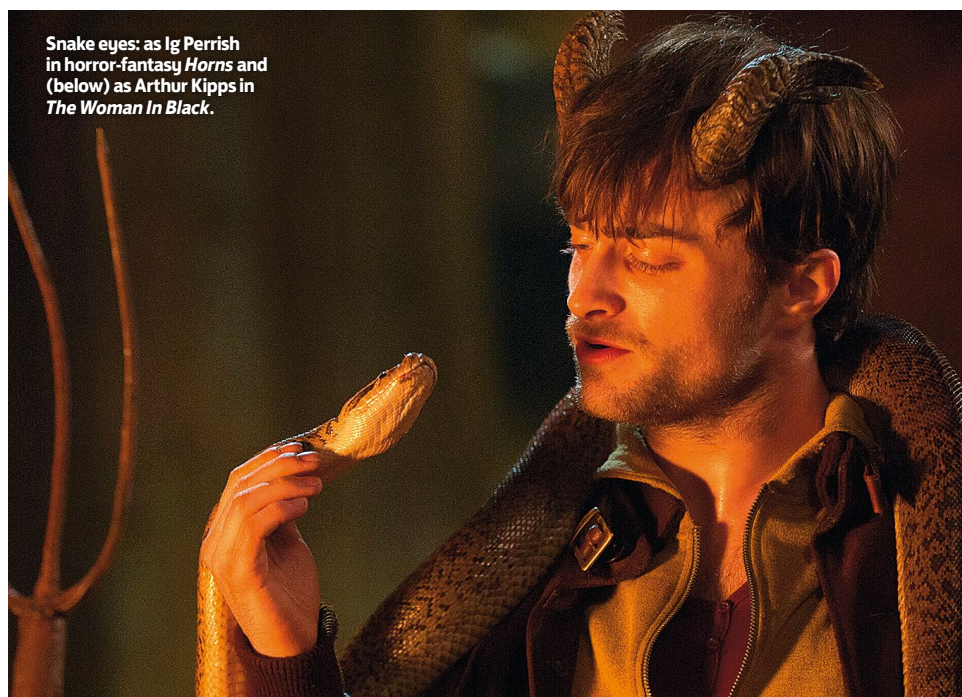
"I've definitely got my list of directors I want to work with," he says, leaning forward in his chair. "Quentin Tarantino, Paul Thomas Anderson, Spike Jonze, Wes Anderson, Chris Nolan... But I'm not fixated on that either. There's also something incredibly exciting to me about working with people who are the next one of those guys, and I absolutely think John Krokidas, who directed *Kill Your Darlings*, is going to make great, great films. The guys I'm about to

work with [*on Swiss Army Man*] are something else. They're called the Daniels [*Dan Kwan and Daniel Scheinert*]. They come from the music world and directed the video for [*DJ Snake's*] 'Turn Down For What'. They made a short film called *Interesting Ball*, which I recommend. They're amazing. Working with them is like buying shares in Microsoft, back in the day."

A more brand-recognition title is *Now You See Me 2*, which Radcliffe has wrapped. The first movie saw an FBI agent and Interpol detective (Mark Ruffalo, Melanie Laurent) track a team of illusionists (Jesse Eisenberg, Isla Fisher, Woody Harrelson, Dave Franco) who pulled off real bank heists during their stage act. There is, then, something deliciously cheeky about plunging the former Harry Potter into a very different world of magic. Radcliffe had his own reasons for signing up.

"I'd seen the first film, enjoyed it, and thoroughly enjoyed the cast," he shrugs. "It was really fun to do a big movie like that, and to do a supporting part in something; I'd been looking for something where I could just be part of an ensemble, have that experience. There were so many people I really respected

Snake eyes: as Ig Perrish in horror-fantasy *Horns* and (below) as Arthur Kipps in *The Woman In Black*.



Blazer/sbirt Adrien Sauvage
Trousers Lanvin

'I'M FASCINATED TO KNOW WHAT THE PLOT OF FANTASTIC BEASTS WILL BE'

and looked up to in it. To have scenes with Michael Caine and Mark Ruffalo was amazing." It's no good asking him about the plot, mind, or just how his character fits into the dynamic. "I don't really want to say," he smiles. "I feel I should keep that [quiet] because there's a bit of a reveal. So yeah, I'll keep schtum on that."

You might expect him to also keep schtum when asked about *Harry Potter* spin-off *Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them*, but let's not forget he's a media-savvy, affable

chap, and the last thing he wants to do is give a frustratingly tight-lipped interview. Based on J.K. Rowling's slimline 2001 book, which arrived on shelves credited to Newt Scamander and purporting to be the textbook that Harry studied in *Philosopher's Stone*, it contains the history of Magizoology and details 85 magical species that Scamander observed during his travels across five continents. The film – the first of a planned trilogy – will be set 70 years before the *Harry Potter* franchise and will focus on the adventures of Newt (Eddie Redmayne) within New York's secret community of witches and wizards.

"Erm, it intrigues me more than anything," he offers when asked if he finds the idea of more exploits within an extended *Potter* universe a thrilling prospect. "I think I am also fascinated to know what the story is going to be. I loved that little bestiary book that came out, but it's teeny tiny. And it's going to be a big film."

Fair point. So might a cameo from a certain zigzag-scarred wizard be part of that fleshing-out process, perhaps in a flash-forward? "Don't ask me about that!" he laughs, offering a spark of hope to fans around the world. And then it's snuffed... "I'm sure it will be a little weird because it's *Harry Potter* stuff going on without me. I don't know. Maybe it'll be nice. Maybe it'll be good. Maybe Eddie becoming the face of the

franchise will mean he gets the questions now!" Another hearty guffaw. "It might take some of the pressure off. But yeah, I don't know. We'll see. I'm very intrigued. I'm also intrigued by the play that's been announced [Harry Potter And The Cursed Child, a two-part story co-written by J.K. Rowling and due to open summer 2016]. I saw that online the other day. I was like, 'OK, wow.' It was a very funny press release because it said several times that it was not a prequel, but it went on to say that it was about Harry's parents and took place in the years just before Harry's birth. I think we're redefining prequel if we're saying that's not a prequel!"

With so many mysteries and possibilities swirling, one thing's for sure: just as

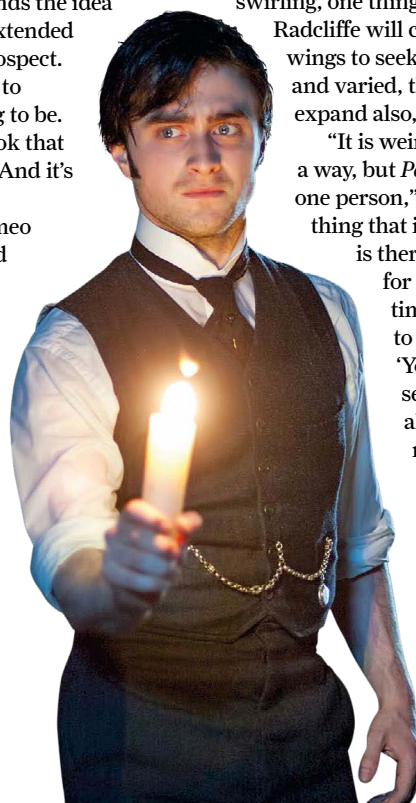
Radcliffe will continue to spread his wings to seek a career that is long and varied, the *Potter* universe will expand also, with or without him.

"It is weird seeing it carry on in a way, but *Potter* is bigger than any one person," he says. "And the one thing that is very much apparent is there's still a huge hunger

for it. I meet people all the time who say, 'Are you going to do any more?' I'm like, 'You know there's only seven books? We did them all!'" The laugh fills the room for a final time.

"But people are very much up for more, so they will be satisfied." **15**

Victor Frankenstein
opens on 3 December.
Now You See Me 2 opens
on 10 June 2016.



'TRAINING DAYS

If actors want to convince at playing boxers, superheroes, rebel leaders or double-0 agents they need to pay in serious sweat. Can normal folk build an A-list body without the million-dollar pay packet? As *Creed* prepares to get in the box office ring, **Total Film** checks out the disciplines needed to get set-ready.

WORDS MARK LINDORES



BOXING

Ever since method man Robert De Niro packed on the muscle to portray Jake La Motta in *Raging Bull* (1980), the pressure has been on for anyone hoping to deliver a knockout performance. Michael B. Jordan was in shape but had his work cut out when he signed on to 2016's instalment in the *Rocky* franchise, *Creed*.

Working out under the guidance of Sylvester Stallone, Jordan logged intense training sessions with legendary pugilists Floyd Mayweather and Amir Khan. "[Sly] knows movie boxing better than anyone so I really just listened to him and trusted him," says Jordan. "He oversaw everything, trained six days a week, and ate six times a day – the diet was key. I basically ate grilled chicken, brown rice and broccoli the whole time."

Jake Gyllenhaal's physique in *Southpaw* took similar dedication. Having slimmed down to 150lb for *Nightcrawler*, Gyllenhaal called on former boxer and trainer Terry Claybon to mould him into a mauler during six months prep before filming started.

"I pushed him to the limit," smiles Claybon. "I didn't want him to come on set and act like a boxer, I wanted him to be a boxer. I started him off with three hours of workouts a day, an hour-and-a-half in the morning and an hour-and-a-half in the evening. After two months, we went up to six hours a day: three hours of boxing in the morning and three hours of strengthening, conditioning, and cardio at night."

By the time filming started, Jake was crafting those washboard abs with 2000 sit-ups per day.



WHAT YOU NEED

Time – building up to pro boxer level requires full-time training, recovery and protein-focused diet over a minimum of half a year. Check out England Boxing, the national governing body for boxing to find a boxing school near you.

abae.co.uk



WHAT YOU NEED

Enthusiasm. Krav Maga can be applied to all fitness levels and used as a fitness tool, self defence or confidence booster for all ages and genders. For more information see kravmagaglobal-uk.com

KRAV MAGA

Originally a training discipline deployed by the Israeli army which places its emphasis on maintaining a continuous combat motion, Krav Maga is now one of the most utilised fight disciplines used in film today. A major component of the next-level fight sequences in *SPECTRE*, *Sicario*, *Avengers Assemble*, *Fast & Furious 7* and *Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation*, it's a firm favourite of the likes of Jason Statham, Charlize Theron and Michelle Rodriguez.

Although largely derived from street fighting, Krav Maga also incorporates techniques of Aikido, Judo, boxing and wrestling, with an element of self-defence which works in a real-life confrontational setting as opposed to a ring or a cage. That's why the principles of Krav Maga have been refined in recent years and have become commonplace in police and military establishments. Not to mention on the big screen...

"Directors are coming to us because they want realistic fight scenes," says Darren Levine, founder of Krav Maga Worldwide, a Los Angeles training centre which now boasts a membership roster consisting of some seriously A-list clientele. "Leonardo DiCaprio was one of the first film stars we worked with about 10 years ago, for *Blood Diamond*. He was out of shape when he first came to us, and he left rock-solid."

Since then, Levine and his team in Los Angeles have lent their expertise to Daniel Craig to enhance his skills for the role of James Bond ("He was very impressive—all business") and Tom Cruise for the *Mission: Impossible* franchise ("superb to work with").

"It's the in the thing, for actors and performers," Levine says. "Not just for the skills they learn, but because it's fun."

>>

BODY BUILDING

For films like *The Wolverine*, *Pain & Gain* and *Batman V Superman*, where physical perfection is a must, there's no avoiding the gym. Heavy weight sessions to bulk up, exhausting cardio to trim down and a diet of grilled chicken or fish, broccoli, egg whites and protein shakes are key to a screen-worthy six-pack. Performance enhancers, we're told, are "a definite no-no" (unless you're going method, like Ben Foster in *The Program*).

"I have never once had to convince Hugh that training was a good idea," says trainer David Kingsbury, who has beefed up Mr Jackman for the past five years. "We once arrived off a flight at 4am, were in the gym by 5am and on set by 7am, and that is not a freak event. If Hugh's going to be working until 7pm, it is not unusual for him to be up at 3.30am to train."

Mark Wahlberg is another focused early bird. To fit in his exhaustive training regimes, he's in bed at 8pm in order to be up at 2.30am to work out from 3am to 4am. Then it's off to a basketball court for an hour before returning at 6am for a plate of chicken and veg and heading to work or the school run. If he's on-set, he'll do 500 sit-ups during the day and 45 minutes of boxing at 6pm before popping on the PJs.

His *Pain & Gain* co-star Dwayne Johnson "always executes at 100 per cent" laughs Hollywood trainer and bodybuilder George Farah. "He stays in shape so we really just modified his regime," he adds. "We added daily cardio, dropped his carbs and cut out the one cheat meal a week that he was eating, and we saw immediate drastic results in his physique."



WHAT YOU NEED

Discipline. No cheating, no slacking and no lie-ins. Check out the National Amateur Body Building Association at nabba.co.uk to get started.

WHAT YOU NEED

Determination, a reasonable level of cardiovascular fitness (five-minute rounds don't sound very demanding but try it and see!) and a high pain threshold. Check out ringsideworld.co.uk to find your nearest MMA training centre.



MIXED MARTIAL ARTS (MMA)

Currently the fastest-growing sport in the world thanks to the billion-dollar UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) and figureheads such as Conor McGregor and Ronda Rousey (next starring in the *Roadhouse* remake), MMA's influence is being felt throughout film and TV, with *Never Back Down*, *Fighting Warrior*, *Kingdom* and *Entourage* all using the sport as a significant backdrop. Tough to get fighting fit for?

Legendary MMA coach Greg Jackson trained *Warrior* stars Tom Hardy, Joel Edgerton and Frank Grillo. "In the past, martial arts had largely been portrayed as an underground thing, with a kind of cock-fighting reputation," says Jackson. "*Warrior* is as accurate as any movie can get about MMA. It shows how martial arts can be a healing thing and not just a tool of violence. It has all these great messages in it that really resonated with me."

Jackson trained the actors as he would a real MMA fighter, meaning a typical day would consist of two hours of boxing, followed by two hours of kickboxing and Muay Thai, two hours of fight choreography and two hours of weightlifting, all while sticking to a "clean" diet of pulled pork, chicken, broccoli, protein shakes and amino acids to help ease aching limbs post workout. He also made them face 'The Hill Of Tears' – a gruelling run up a rugged 8000-foot New Mexico incline in temperatures of up to 100°F.

By the end of the eight week training course, the guys were fully qualified, with both having gained over 20lbs of muscle. "They did it," Greg says proudly. "They did well with the grappling, the striking, with everything, really. They emerged actual mixed martial artists."

WHAT YOU NEED

A gung-ho attitude. Military Boot Camps can give you a taste of the pain. See britmilfit.com for your nearest classes.

CARDIO

A staple of any actor, cardio is the foundation for all physical transformations. One of Hollywood's leading cardio specialists, Dr. Joe Horrigan, has trained actors for *Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle*, the *Spider-Man* movies and, most recently, Jennifer Lawrence for her physically intense role in *The Hunger Games* franchise.

With a focus on "improving Jennifer's stamina, strength and overall fitness", Dr. Horrigan's sessions were varied and tough – ideal to get Jennifer fighting fit in the six weeks she had before she began shooting. "We did 20 minutes of high intensity cardio following a five to 10 minute warm-up," he says. "This was anything from a very hard stationary bike ride, uphill runs, cycling (on road or up mountains) and various aerobic classes such as dance classes and hiking. Then we did a very low intensity workout or yoga to let her body recover once or twice a week. The variation kept it interesting and stopped her body from plateauing. Her favourite was skipping – she was always smiling from ear to ear when she did that!"

As with any workout regime, diet is key to getting results and Dr. Horrigan also made sure that Jennifer's nutrition was on point. "We had to work on her nutrition, because when she came to us she'd been misinformed regarding her diet and had been on strict high-protein diets. She didn't feel very well. We gave her a nutrition plan that was more reasonable and balanced and we introduced carbohydrates into her diet. It was evidence-based cell nutrition and it worked." *Hunger* is not a game when you're a kickass movie heroine. **TF**

MILITARY TRAINING

To better understand the difficulties faced by the military, stars like Bradley Cooper (*American Sniper*) and Brad Pitt (*Fury*) embrace brutal workouts, physical and mental agility tests, and forgo home comforts.

With just a 12-week timeframe to transform from *Hangover* dude to Navy SEAL Chris Kyle, Cooper packed on 40lbs of muscle under a rigorous training regime devised by trainer Jason Walsh and Kyle's real-life friend, Kevin Lacz. He was given nine demanding workouts a week, and fuelled by a diet that required him to pack in a whopping 5,000 calories a day. He couldn't get all those calories from four-cheese-topped pizzas and pitchers of beer, mind. "Those calories all had to come from very healthy, clean foods and protein-rich drinks," Walsh says. "Eating that much is miserable so we had to supplement some of the calories."

Because Kyle was a military man and not a bodybuilder, Cooper's regime focused on compound movements such as deadlifts, squats and bench presses, with heavy weights to give him size and functional strength. It pushed him way beyond his comfort zone.

"There were days when he came in and he was so beat down," Walsh recalls. "I'd tell him, 'Go home, you're not going to work out today.' If I had pushed him I probably would have hurt him – and once you have someone who's injured, you're done. That's a lot of stress, a big responsibility to take on something like that with a big client like that. It's my reputation on the line with a big studio that's paying me to get this guy in shape."

WHAT YOU NEED

Creativity. You don't need a fancy gym membership or personal trainer for this one – just switch up activities that challenge your body and get your heart pumping. Run in the park, hike (to a pub!), swim a mile, weight-lift your kid....

MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS

Freezing, remote locations, unhappy crews, the relentless pursuit of perfection... Birdman director Alejandro G. Iñárritu pushed Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hardy and his team beyond their limits to achieve his vision. Artistic necessity or Heart Of Darkness? Total Film heads into the edit suite of epic revenge movie **The Revenant**...

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM





Testing times: director Alejandro González Iñárritu on location with Leonardo DiCaprio.

Mid-July, Los Angeles. Alejandro González Iñárritu is leading *Total Film* through the corridors of his production offices in Santa Monica towards his generous office and, opposite, his luxurious edit bay. Walking and talking, it's reminiscent of a scene out of his most recent movie, the Oscar-winning *Birdman, Or The Unexpected Virtue Of Ignorance*, only the passageways are less cramped and there's no sign of Edward Norton guzzling gin and gabbling about erectile dysfunction. But Iñárritu does spout fast, flavourful dialogue, and though he's today warm, enthusiastic and generous with his time, it's not hard to detect the combative streak that's often attributed to him.

"I shot that on my iPhone," he fires off, nodding at a *Birdman* poster, then crashes through the door into his office and perches on the edge of the desk, backlit by the morning sun streaming through a widescreen window.

"I think it's a very simple story of a man trying to find a reason to live," he begins, explaining the appeal of telling the true tale of frontiersman Hugh Glass (Leonardo DiCaprio), a fur trapper who was mauled by a bear in 1823 while hunting in what would become the Dakota Territory. Prostrate, Glass is robbed by his companions and left to bleed out in the snow, yet somehow survives to trek 200 miles over treacherous, godforsaken terrain with a broken leg and festering wounds, driven by a burning desire to avenge himself on the author of all his pain, John Fitzgerald (Tom Hardy).

"There was something that attracted me to make a survival adventure film – the reasons *why* you survive," Iñárritu continues, his strong Mexican accent adding to the passion of his words. "What's given to you at the end when you have lost everything? What gives human beings that instinct to keep breathing?" But lest you think that *The Revenant* is just another revenge drama, albeit one dressed up in furs and afforded a \$135m budget (more of which later), Iñárritu and co-writer Mark

revenge is a tool to keep you alive, but if that's the goal of your life, you have a fucking shitty, weak, stupid life to live. What I'm saying [*in The Revenant*] is, 'What is after revenge?' I tried to explore what it takes for somebody to survive – and revenge is one of the reasons – but to show that during the road to revenge, you learn more things, and you start questioning if it's worth it."

But burrowing into the psychology and guts of desperate men is only one of the ways

"I WANTED THIS FILM TO
BE A SONIC PAINTING THAT
YOU CAN GET LOST IN"

ALEJANDRO GONZÁLEZ IÑÁRRITU

L. Smith, working partly from Michael Punke's 2002 novel of the same name, sought to dig deeper. It is for this reason that they rewrote a script that had been circling Hollywood since 2001, with Park Chan-wook originally set to direct Samuel L. Jackson, and John Hillcoat then attaching himself with Christian Bale as Glass.

"Revenge is empty," Iñárritu states. "After you commit it, it will give you hype for 30 seconds, and then it's gone. And that's what happens to me when I see revenge movies. I get very excited in that moment – 'Ah, he killed it!' – and then it leaves me absolutely empty. There's nothing more. I think, for me,

in which *The Revenant* separates itself from an untold number of bloodthirsty genre movies. Demanding absolute authenticity, Iñárritu scouted locations for five years before filming began in October 2014, seeking landscapes that were "not man-touched". He would drag cast, crew, equipment, horses, bison and a grizzly bear up snow-drenched mountains in -40° temperatures. Again working with DoP Emmanuel Lubezki, he would build upon the techniques employed in *Birdman* to shoot in long, labyrinthine takes ("There's no, like, shitty cutting") and reject all artificial

THE HORROR, THE HORROR...

Other nightmare shoots...

THE AFRICAN QUEEN 1951

Shot partly on location in Uganda and the Congo, John Huston's WWI adventure tale saw cast and crew plagued by sickness (Katharine Hepburn vomited into a bucket between takes). Humphrey Bogart boasted of remaining in good health because he drank whisky, not water.

AGUIRRE, WRATH OF GOD 1972

For his tale of Spanish conquistadors questing for El Dorado, Werner Herzog lead his production into the Peruvian rainforest and along tributaries of the Amazon. Star Klaus Kinski shot off an extra's fingertip and 400 monkeys escaped off a raft into the rainforest.



JAWS 1975

A young Steven Spielberg can attest that worse things happen at sea, as bad weather held up production, boats sailed into his frame, and the mechanical sharks malfunctioned. "I was naive about Mother Nature," Spielberg lamented. The crew nicknamed the man-eating shark movie "Flaws".

APOCALYPSE NOW 1979

Expensive sets destroyed by freak weather, Brando turning up monstrously overweight, lead actor Martin Sheen suffering a heart attack... Francis Ford Coppola really did discover the heart of darkness in the jungles of the Philippines.

FITZCARRALDO 1982

Herzog (yes, him again) oversaw his cast transporting a 320-ton steamship over a mountain to recreate the true-life tale of a Peruvian rubber baron in the 1890s. A Native Chief offered to kill Kinski (yes, him again) for Herzog, so troublesome was the actor. **JG**

light. He would shoot the story, where possible, chronologically. And he would film for just 90 minutes a day to ensure that the action was bathed in only the purest light. Such fiendish conditions led to a nightmarish eight-month shoot that took in floods and blizzards, while freak weather meant the production "ran out of snow" before it could shoot its climax. Cue *more* location scouting, with the retention of the services of cast and crew (Hardy had to drop out of playing grim-faced grunt Rick Flag, saying, "I got ass-slammed out of *Suicide Squad*") seeing the budget spiral from an estimated \$95m to \$130m. Finally everybody schlepped from Calgary to the Argentinian Patagonia to close out the picture.

"It's worth it," Iñárritu insists. "The problem with locations today is they are managed by human beings. They are parks. Rivers have been dammed. I wanted the reality of these men. Natural light, no visual FX; many films look like a video games. I had to create the narrative where the film starts in Autumn and goes to full winter, so it took years to get all the pieces together. I wanted this to be a sonic painting that you can get lost in." He considers. "I was at a river. I was absolutely obsessed that the river have some mist, mystery. I shot one scene and I wasn't happy – there was no mystery. So I fought to go to another, very difficult river. The cinemas gods gave me one day full of fucking mist, and it was amazing." His face twists in grim amusement. "When my daughter went to visit me and I showed her the scene, she said, 'That looks good, father, looks like Narnia.' I almost got a heart attack."

But is it worth it, as Iñárritu insists? For while such uncompromising artistic vision – or, put another way, monomania – has hitherto given us some of cinema's greatest masterpieces in the form of, say, Werner Herzog's *Aguirre, The Wrath Of God* and *Fitzcarraldo*, and Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (see sidebar, left), there is also, surely, a line that should not be crossed. Can a movie ever be worth putting so many people through such discomfort?

Two days after speaking to Iñárritu in his office and edit suite – where, it should be said, he screened *Total Film* the first 20 minutes of the film, a phenomenal, 200-strong battle scene in which the trappers are set upon by Native Americans, with arrows thunking into necks as the camera glides and floats and pirouettes around the dropping bodies – a story broke in *Screen International* labelling the shoot a "living hell". As well as drawing attention to the escalating budget and brutal cold, the article pointed to the high turnover of crew – some fired, others quitting – and Iñárritu banishing producer Jim Skotchdopole from the set (the director argues that Skotchdopole was "redeployed", though



Elemental drama: Domhnall Gleeson rides out; (above) as Andrew Henry; (below) a forbidding vision of skulls.



Mary Parent later took over on-set duties and Skotchdopole moved on.) Iñárritu was also taken to task for orchestrating a scene in which a naked character is dragged along the ground at reported risk to his genitals, a claim that Iñárritu dismisses as “a lie”, stressing safety was his number one priority and that he was “super considerate”.

October, London. *Total Film* meets with two key cast members, Domhnall Gleeson and Will Poulter, to ask just how tough the shoot really was, and if any of the demands went beyond the bounds of reason.

Gleeson offers a rueful grin as he recalls his months playing Andrew Henry, captain of the fur trappers. “It was... What’s the polite way of putting it? Tough as fuck,” he says. “But that was the plan. He told us at the beginning! We were never going to be strolling from trailers to an air-conditioned studio. He told us we were going places where not many people go and he was going to put us in it. And the film is absolutely the better for it. He didn’t do it because he wanted us to be uncomfortable. He did it because he knew the film would be better. It’s a cliché, but they don’t make movies like this any more. I’d do it again. Sign me up.”

Poulter, who plays Jim Bridger, assistant understudy to Glass and the youngest of the trappers, concurs. “We were warned,” he shrugs. “We were told to embrace the weather. If it was raining, we shot in rain. If there was a blizzard, we shot through it. It took its toll but it helped us capture some very real and raw moments. And you can never be 100 per cent prepared for any film. There are certain variables. The weather was a big obstacle to us.”

But surely it was worse for the crew? Actors, after all, can be flown in to shoot in



Love matters: DiCaprio's frontiersman Hugh Glass is out for revenge.

the translucent, transcendent light of ‘magic hour’ and flown out again, pronto. It’s the technicians who have to be there for hours setting up. “For sure,” nods Gleeson. “The crew had it very, very tough, and the way you describe it is the way for actors, always. But we were in and out of water at minus whatever, all day. I would say, on this film, everybody had it tough, and some days the actors had it worse.”

“There’s a moment where I’m submerged underwater, and it’s only for a few seconds but we did so many takes,” Poulter shudders. “The water was *so* cold. It was not an experience I’d ever come close to. I never knew it was possible to be that cold. It totally threw me for a loop.”

Interestingly, Gleeson has seen a near-final cut of *The Revenant* and insists it is truly, with no promotional bullshit, unlike anything he’s seen. The landscapes, the light, the open-wound emotions, the battle scenes... “And the bear

attack is one of the maddest things I’ve ever seen!” he adds. “I saw it in a screening room by myself and I was shouting: ‘AAARGH! JESUS!’”

Two weeks later, *Total Film* calls Iñárritu, who’s now just a couple of weeks from locking the film. “We got there and we shot with a bear,” he explains, casually. “You get a lot of the reality.” And though he goes on to admit that the scene is augmented with CGI – just about the only time pixels are used to add anything rather than to take away – he stresses, “Nobody will have ever experienced a scene like that. It’s a real-time thing. People will shit their pants.”

The filmmaker remains adamant that everything on *The Revenant* was done correctly, safely, for legitimate artistic reasons, and that the studio knew from day one that the budget might escalate. He points out that he



Mountain men: Will Poulter plays Jim Bridger; (right) Tom Hardy as John Fitzgerald.



is renowned for his thriftiness, having brought in all of his previous movies on or under budget. His way was the only way to do this particular story justice, he asserts.

"Honestly, we are such pussies, complaining we have no Wi-Fi," he laughs of modern man.

"We have become pathetic. These men were really, really men. So cold, so isolated." He sent his actors on boot camp to find the right skills and mindset: from stripping pelts to firing a 19th-century rifle to holding a pipe. DiCaprio, like his co-stars, took it all the way, saying:

"I can name 30 or 40 sequences that were some of the most difficult things I've ever had to do, whether it's going in and out of frozen rivers or sleeping in animal carcasses... I certainly don't eat raw bison liver on a regular basis."

Is such Method dedication really necessary, *Total Film* asks Inárritu, or is there an argument that actors should try acting, dear boy? "I think it *is* helpful. You need to be in the emotional state of mind. Leo wanted to try these things. You can see the reaction – how his eyes fill with horror. There are things that can't be performed, and that is one of them."

Inevitably, much of the buzz swirling around *The Revenant* pertains to whether it will finally bag DiCaprio his Academy Award after zero wins from five nominations. "I think the last thing Leo has in his mind is that," says Inárritu, who doesn't warm to talk about Oscars and who, back in the cutting bay, brushed away *TF*'s queries about possible gongs as "pathetic". He sighs down the line. "To measure your life with those medals is absolutely wrong and I don't think he cares. What's more important is that people connect with the film." He pauses, then concedes a few inches. "Now, if you ask me does he deserve it? Absolutely."

He's right, of course – hypothesising about golden baldies feels reductive when surveying the mountains that cast and crew have scaled, literally and figuratively, to fashion *The Revenant*. A huge physical, mental, technical and artistic endeavour, the film is bigger than ballot slips, in its making, its ambition and its themes. It is, no less, about the forging of America...

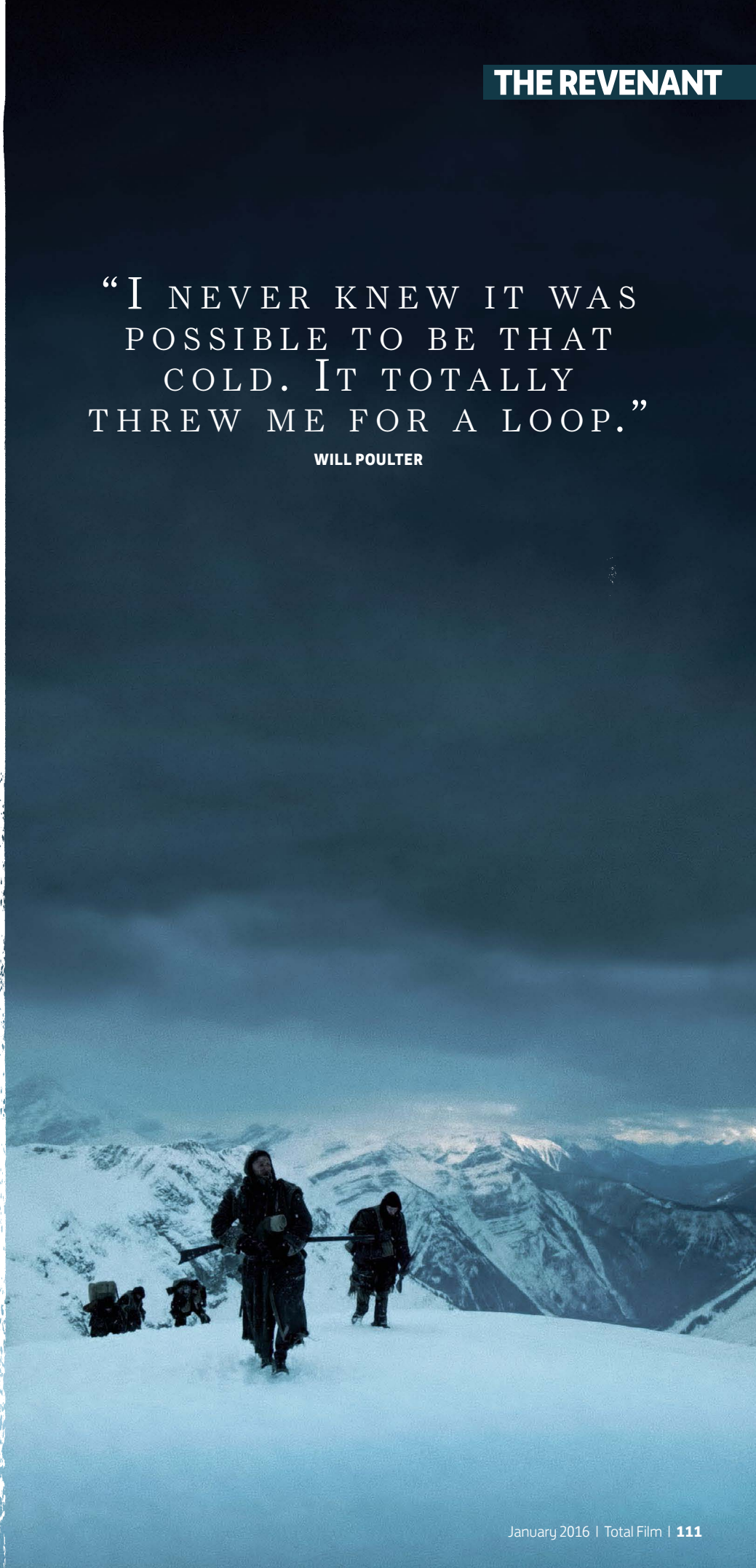
"This is a period of time that hasn't been explored," concludes Inárritu. "There was no gold, there was no oil. The biggest industry in the United States was the pelt industry. It was killing animals. The war with the Native Americans was because the trappers began to really cross the line; instead of buying, they were hunting. There was this melting pot of people – French, Mexican, English, these new guys coming from the east – and it was massive exploitation. Slavery was normal. Everything you hunt is for the company." He takes a breath. "It was the beginning of capitalism."

A prequel, of sorts, to DiCaprio's *The Wolf Of Wall Street*? We'd buy that for a dollar... **TF**

***The Revenant* opens on 15 January.**

"I NEVER KNEW IT WAS
POSSIBLE TO BE THAT
COLD. IT TOTALLY
THREW ME FOR A LOOP."

WILL POULTER






SPOTLIGHT

Gong Girl

Will **Brie Larson** be this year's Jennifer Lawrence? Charting a rapid trajectory from indie darling to awards golden girl with a monster blockbuster next on her dance card, Total Film meets the star of *Room*, whose astonishing performance could take her all the way. **WORDS** JAMES MOTTRAM **PORTRAIT** JUSTIN COIT / TRUNK



I don't take roles that are 'just another role'," says Brie Larson, defiantly. It's hard to disagree. Since the Californian-born actress gained plaudits – and an Independent Spirit nomination – for playing a counsellor for at-risk teenagers in 2013's searing *Short Term 12*, she's put together an impressive run of roles. Already this year, she was Mark Wahlberg's student in *The Gambler* and Amy Schumer's sister in Judd Apatow's hit comedy *Trainwreck*.

Moreover, Larson already has films in the can for Todd Solondz and Ben Wheatley and a lead role in the soon-to-shoot blockbuster prequel *Kong: Skull Island*. But it's her new film – Lenny Abrahamson's *Room* – that's gaining

all the attention. "Hers is the kind of performance that can elevate a career to a new plane," remarked *Vanity Fair*. And since the film gained momentum at Toronto, where it won the festival's Audience Award, Larson's fast becoming a nailed-on nominee for Best Actress at next year's Oscars.

Today, sitting pretty in a London hotel suite in a pale blue Osman dress and cream flats, her honey-coloured hair neatly stacked, the 26 year-old looks camera-ready. In truth, though, plastering her face with war paint isn't quite her. "When I have makeup on, I have a very difficult time looking in the mirror," she admits. "I think it just looks bizarre to me. Every time I go to the bathroom today, I wash my hands looking down. Otherwise

you go, 'Wah! I don't know what that face is!' It doesn't look like me at all."

It's not her only foible. "I have this weird thing [about] not liking to see my face bigger than it is, if I were to be looking in a mirror." Which, as an actress who will likely be in IMAX 3D when *Kong: Skull Island* is released in 2017, is a bit of a problem. Cinema screens, she says, are too big to watch yourself on. "I find it terrifying." Perhaps this says it all about Larson: an actress that likes to keep it intimate, raw and real, rather than over-the-top and larger-than-life.

No wonder she's so splendid in *Room*. Based on the 2010 best-selling novel by Emma Donoghue, Larson plays Ma, mother to five-year-old boy Jack (Jacob Tremblay). >>



Food for thought: Larson as *Room*'s Ma alongside Jack (Jacob Tremblay).

The 'Room' in question is their entire world; Larson's character has been kidnapped and imprisoned by a barely-glimpsed man, named Old Nick (Sean Bridgers), who arrives most nights, bringing supplies and forcing himself on Ma. It's through these grim circumstances of confinement that Jack has arrived.

If the story feels like it has the potential to be unrelentingly bleak, there are moments of optimism – symbolised by the sunbeams that shine through the skylight in what Jack and Ma simply call 'Room'. Jack, of course, has given Ma a reason to live, a hope to cling to in the direst of circumstances. "I think seeing the love between a mother and child is something we can all really relate to," Larson muses. "You can remember it from your own childhood perspective. You can see it from the adult perspective."

The bond conjured between Larson and nine-year-old Tremblay is the emotional glue that holds the film together. Every day, before reaching the set, she and her young co-star would sit in the production office and make crafts from foil, string, crayons and tape – the sort of basic materials Ma and Jack would have access too – and then take them into Room. "It wasn't just a set," notes Larson.

"It had a life to it. It had a life that Jacob and I had created together."

Larson consulted with a nutritionist and – much to her relief – shot the role without make-up to give herself a pallid, Vitamin D-deficient look. Going on a strict diet, she worked with a trainer, dropping 13lbs of fat from her already-slim frame but gaining 15lbs of muscle. She also wrote diaries in character – one at 10 years old, one at 14, one at 17 – and consulted with a trauma expert to learn how a victim might cope with long-term incarceration. But did it ever get too much? Did she go home every night and cry?

"The times that I would cry at home was when I would call my mom asking for forgiveness for all that I didn't know as a kid," she says, bluntly. "It wasn't the depression of Ma's story; it was how little I knew of the struggle of being a mother. Suddenly I was able to in some ways relive my childhood from my mom's perspective and see all of the ways that she loved me and protected me and see all of the ways I never noticed it."

With a cast that includes Joan Allen and William H. Macy as her parents – the sheer horror of a lost daughter etched into their faces – *Room* isn't entirely set inside the confines of

those four walls. But for the scenes that were, Larson wasn't overwhelmed, despite the claustrophobic nature of the set (all shot at Pinewood Studios). "That was our space, that was our world," she says. "It actually became a safe place for my brain to click into Ma, and then when I could walk out, I was myself."

Once inside Room, she was Ma. "She disappears into a character," notes the film's Irish director Lenny Abrahamson (*Frank*), though Larson likens it to scuba diving. "You don't just strap on a tank and jump into the water. You have to learn how deep it is that you're going. And depending how deep you go, the less time you could stay down there and the more time it takes to get to the surface." Same goes for *Room* – with Larson staying in character for short bursts, so, as she puts it, "you don't run out of air."

Quite where she's picked up this level of maturity is hard to say; it certainly wasn't from her surroundings. Born in Sacramento, Larson spent her youth in the "uncultured" Santa Clarita. "It's a really small, conservative place," she says. "All the kids I went to school with, their parents were cops and they ate

Pop-Tarts.” Her parents were chiropractors, running a practice together, until they divorced and Larson moved to Los Angeles with her mother and sister.

Growing up, French was her first language (she bears no trace of an accent now) and she gorged on a diet of classic movies from the likes of Jean-Luc Godard, Akira Kurosawa and John Cassavetes. “I enjoyed the fact that my parents and my sister couldn’t get through them,” she says, mischievously. In a recent article on the Criterion website, she listed her 10 favourite films, headed by Godard’s *A Woman Is A Woman*. “That was a huge one for me.”

Early on, Larson felt the pull of being an artist. “I felt it bubbling inside of me. I felt an on-edge quality of being young and hormonal and depressed and excited at the same time.” While her mother remarried a cameraman who worked making industrial videos, Larson’s first gig was in 1998, when she was 9, performing skits on *The Tonight Show With Jay Leno*, including a fake kids’ commercial, ‘Malibu Mudslide Barbie’.

“It was around the time there were a lot of mudslides happening in Malibu,” she grins.

She continued acting in forgettable TV and film fare throughout her school years,

working with *Happiness* director. “He’s a huge inspiration to me... I’d watched all of his films religiously.”

Then there’s Brit-director Ben Wheatley’s *Free Fire*, a Boston-set 1970s crime film about two gangs confronting each other in a warehouse, alongside Armie Hammer and Sam Riley. “I think there’s a certain level of intelligence and understanding of the world and of filmmaking and of art that’s always in [a Wheatley movie],” she says, before clamping up for fear of giving away spoilers.

Likewise, she’s cagey on *Kong: Skull Island*, an origin story of the great ape co-starring Tom Hiddleston and Samuel L. Jackson. “Gosh, there’s so much going on, I hardly remember,” she charmingly evades, when *Total Film* presses her for an insight into her character. But she does reveal that it was the chance to play in a studio-tentpole that intrigued her. “Tom Hiddleston and I had a conversation about it, before I was cast,” she reveals, “and we both had the same interest. He’s a big lover of mythology, as am I... For Tom and I, it becomes exciting to take the stories that we know and we think are important to be

“Playing a role like Ma is like scuba diving. You have to learn how deep you’re going”

but it wasn’t until she hit 20 that the real work started. Winning the role of Toni Collette’s sexually promiscuous daughter in TV series *United States Of Tara*, she followed that up with film roles in Noah Baumbach’s *Greenberg* and Edgar Wright’s *Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World*, in which she also sang with the band Metric.

In the past, Larson has released one album, 2005’s *Finally Out Of P.E.* (she also dates Phantom Planet singer Alex Greenwald), but she’s not “hung up”, she says, on forging a pop career. “I don’t think any aspects of these different creative things I do are any bigger than any other. They all make up the patchwork of me. I need all of them to balance me out. I have to constantly be making things, anything from crafts and cooking to song-writing to acting, directing and painting. I need all of them.”

Given how in-demand she is, it doesn’t seem like she’ll have much time for her other artistic pursuits. Currently in talks to play tennis star Billie Jean King in *Battle Of The Sexes*, she’s fresh off completing Todd Solondz’s typically droll ensemble *Wiener-Dog*, about a canine and the joy it spreads as it travels around the country. “It was a total bucket-list moment,” she says of

retold and do it on a scale that will be reached by more people.”

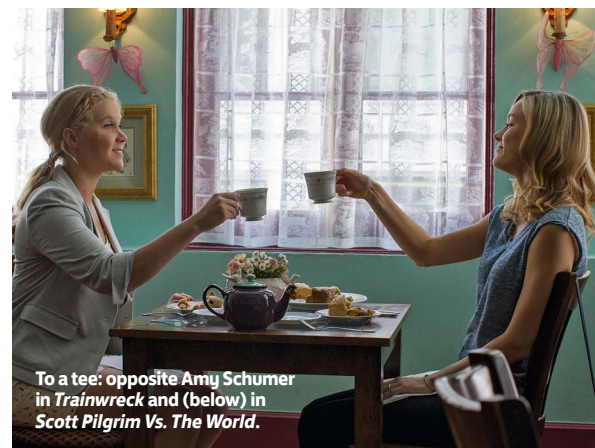
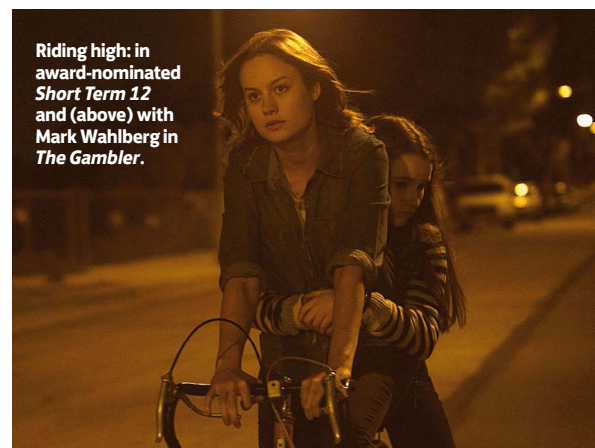
She points out that her intended *Kong* trip is not so far removed from *Room*, which is replete with the myths of Bluebeard, Rapunzel and the story of Demeter and Persephone. “*Room* is not going to be seen by everybody. It’s going to be seen by certain types of people. But it’s not going to hit a mass audience in the same way that something like *King Kong* can. But *King Kong* has the same mythological roots. That’s why *Star Wars* holds such a space in our hearts. It’s a fun, accessible adventure movie but it has all of the old mythology in it.”

Room was difficult to leave behind, she says, partly because it meant letting go of Ma for good. “I never get nervous with the prep,” she explains. “I don’t get nervous with the shooting. I only get nervous once it’s done and then there’s nothing I can do about it anymore.” The sensational reactions so far would suggest that she’s delivered a near-perfect performance. “It has zero to do with me!” she protests. The Academy may well differ when it comes to dishing out next year’s Oscars. **TF**

Room opens on 15 January.



Riding high: in award-nominated *Short Term 12* and (above) with Mark Wahlberg in *The Gambler*.



To a tee: opposite Amy Schumer in *Trainwreck* and (below) in *Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World*.



Woman ON THE Verge

Triumph-over-adversary true story. Transformative turn from Eddie Redmayne. Last year's Oscar winner might just drive **The Danish Girl** from troubled inception to awards glory...

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM

Tom Hooper sighs, wearily. "Seven years ago, I was told this is a difficult film to make, to get financed. Now, I'm told it's a timely film to do." Such is the fickle nature of the movie business. But there can be no question that Hooper's *The Danish Girl* is arriving at just the right time. Dealing with the first-ever recorded case of gender re-assignment surgery, this adaptation of David Ebershoff's book is just one of several transgender tales to tap the zeitgeist.

"It's become part of the mainstream, which is very exciting," says Hooper, over coffee, when *Total Film* meets up with him at London's Claridges Hotel. On television, Jeffrey Tambor recently won an Emmy for his portrayal of Maura Pfefferman, the transgender woman who comes out to her family late in life, in the Amazon series *Transparent*, while *Orange Is The New Black* had already blazed a trail with the casting of Laverne Cox – the first transgender woman to appear on the cover of *Time* magazine.

Others include the recent release of the low-budget transgender prostitute story *Tangerine* and, of course, the story of the

Kardashians' father Bruce and his transition into Caitlyn Jenner, all served up in the reality show *I Am Cait*. "By starting so long ago, we've become fashionable!" half-jokes *The Danish Girl*'s screenwriter, Lucinda Coxon. "We're lucky that we didn't make it sooner because it would've ended up being a much smaller film with a much smaller reach."

First optioned by producer Gail Mutrux in 2000, *The Danish Girl* is the very definition of long-gestating. Directors including Tomas Alfredson and Lasse Hallström, Neil LaBute and Anand Tucker came and went, while A-list stars fluttered around the project. "It had been a script that had never had any trouble attracting talent," notes Coxon. Nicole Kidman was, at one point, attached to play the titular role of Lili, while Charlize Theron and Rachel Weisz were in the frame to play Lili's partner Gerda.

It's hardly surprising, given Ebershoff's fêted book. Part-fictionalised, it tells the story of Danish artist Einar Wegener who, in 1931, became the first man ever to be transformed surgically into a woman, changing her name to Lili Elbe. Alongside Lili, supporting her all the way, is her spouse, fellow artist Gerda Wegener; it was this remarkable love story flourishing >>





ALICIA VIKANDER

Meet the svensk star who matches Redmayne's performance beat for beat.

Call it kismet, but Alicia Vikander was evidently destined for *The Danish Girl*. She was on the tube in London when she read the announcement that Tom Hooper and Eddie Redmayne would be collaborating on a project she'd been aware of for years. "When I heard they were making it, I thought, 'I want to see that film!'" Vikander recalls, looking tanned in a backless, halterneck Céline dress. Two days later, her agents sent her the script—with the role of Gerda earmarked for her.

At the time, the Swedish actress was best known for playing a Danish queen in *A Royal Affair* and featuring in Joe Wright's *Anna Karenina*. Hooper had been given a sneak early look at Alex Garland's sci-fi *Ex Machina*—though even he probably couldn't have predicted the year Vikander has been having, with starring roles in *Testament Of Youth* and *The Man From U.N.C.L.E* alongside support parts in *Son Of A Gun* and *Burnt*.

"What I loved about Alicia's energy," says Hooper, "[is that] she brings a different, northern European spirit to the piece, which is quite different from Eddie's style of acting." It's her forceful performance that makes certain *The Danish Girl* is not all about Redmayne.

"It's quite rare to have a film where both the leads are extremely equal," she says. "I also think that's the essence of this journey—they're both on this transition together. It is an equal journey and you kind of relate to both of them."

With the 27-year-old Vikander also having completed *Tulip Fever*—another period art tale, this time casting her as a painter's muse—she can also be seen in *The Light Between Oceans*. Arriving in cinemas just a week after *The Danish Girl*, this new movie from *Blue Valentine*'s Derek Cianfrance sees her play wife to Michael Fassbender's lighthouse keeper. She calls her co-star, whom she briefly romanced earlier this year, "one of the great actors of his generation".

Perhaps most intriguingly, this former ballet dancer from Gothenberg is currently shooting the fifth *Bourne* movie, with Matt Damon returning as super-spy Jason Bourne. "I'm a big fan of the *Bourne* movies," she says. "Above anything, it's a popcorn franchise but it has some great substance and intelligence to it, which I really love." Like *The Danish Girl*, the timing was spot-on. "I'm always looking for that chance to be thrown out in totally new and different roles. And this is very far away from anything I've done before." **JM**

Dance act: Amber Heard as BFF Oola Paulson.



against the odds that first intrigued Hooper, when he was given a copy of Coxon's script by casting director Nina Gold.

Then in pre-production on his Oscar-winner *The King's Speech*, Hooper was incredibly moved by the Lili-Gerda relationship. "Really at the core of the film is an exploration of unconditional love, of the true nature of love, which is really putting someone else ahead of yourself," he says. "And really seeing someone else's needs and placing them before yourself. That's what made me cry in the script and that's what I hope moves audiences."

Immediately, he thought of casting Eddie Redmayne. They'd first worked together on his 2005 mini-series *Elizabeth I*, then reunited for his rousing film version of classic musical *Les Misérables*. It was on the set of this that Hooper gave Redmayne the script. "My initial reaction was one of great privilege," says the 32-year-old actor. "I feel that whenever I play a part, there's an element of fear. It's what drives you. But really the overwhelming thing was privilege and wanting to do her story justice."

At the time, Redmayne estimates that his casting in the lead probably delayed the film's financing. But that was before he won an Oscar this year for his remarkable turn as Stephen Hawking in *The Theory Of Everything*. All of a sudden, Redmayne's red-hot, with bookmakers slashing the odds that he'll win back-to-back Best Actor Oscars with his performance as Lili. Given Hooper's track record—an Oscar for Colin Firth on *The King's Speech*, another for Anne Hathaway on *Les Misérables*—it's a bet worth taking.

Redmayne ultimately took a year to prepare for the role, though his research began while working on the Wachowskis' *Jupiter Ascending*, talking to director Lana Wachowski, who had lived as a man, Larry, until 2002. "I mentioned Gerda and Lili's story—and I think she owns art by Gerda of Lili. *Man Into Woman* [an early account of Lili's transformation] was also incredibly important to her." Wachowski pointed Redmayne to some other key texts—Jan Morris' *Conundrum* and Kate Bornstein's *Gender Outlaw*.

Likewise, Alicia Vikander—cast as Gerda—did her own research; she reached out to



Lady part: Eddie Redmayne researched for a year.

Leslie Fabian, who wrote the book *My Husband's A Woman Now*. "Her book was like a little Bible," says Vikander. "It was extremely honest. Above anything, [it shows] you'll support this person and be there and the love is unconditional, but it doesn't mean that it isn't a bumpy road. She told me, 'I feel a bit lonely because people don't realise I'm transitioning too.' And that was really a key thing for me to hold on to."

"There were many things that I was ignorant about," admits Redmayne. "The idea that sexuality and gender are two different things was something I'd been ignorant enough to not really understand." He then proceeds to reveal some shocking statistics: that in 32 states in America, you can still be fired for being transgender; that the suicide rate for transgender people is a staggering 41%. "It's a civil rights movement and one that

'The first day I walked onto set as Lili, I've never felt such scrutiny. Many trans women have told me about that fear' Eddie Redmayne

Shooting in Copenhagen, Berlin and Norway's Romsdal, the cast was rounded out with a fine mix of European and American talent: Ben Whishaw as Henrik, who falls for Lili during her transition; Sebastian Koch as the doctor who performs the miracle surgery; Matthias Schoenaerts as the "selfless" Hans Axlil, an art dealer and friend from Einar's childhood who lends crucial support while holding back his true feelings for Gerda; and Amber Heard as the free-spirited ballet dancer Oola Paulson, a mutual friend to both Gerda and Einar.

For all concerned, it was a learning process.

needs to be discussed."

Yet *The Danish Girl's* arrival, says Heard, is "proof" that our culture is ready for this discussion. As a society, we're starting to be "interested in these stories, interested in asking these questions and interested in redefining some previously held notions and long-standing standards. As a society, we're clearly ready to talk about it. And I think it's about time. It's not an accident that most people have never heard of Lili, who was this extraordinary pioneer."

Coxon concurs. "If nothing else, it puts a story out there that dates back to the late

1920s, early 1930s, that had been lost to history because women's histories, working people's histories, queer history – these are histories that get buried." Indeed, even Lili's story has been warped over time. Published in 1933, the aforementioned *Man Into Woman* beloved by Lana Wachowski was partly based on Lili's writings, though edited by others and, as Coxon notes, "as many great biographies are, it's a work of some fiction".

Perhaps now the world is ready for Lili's story – and thousands like her – but Hooper is careful not to package the plot in the way you might expect. "I think the film is more about revelation and revealing than transformation," he says. "In a way, Lili was always Lili. She had been required to live as a man, which was not what she felt comfortable doing. Eddie and I talked a lot about revealing his latent femininity, revealing the woman that's been so severely suppressed."

With his delicate cheekbones and soft-spoken voice ideally tailored for the part, Redmayne calls it a "long process of discovery" to arrive at Lili's look. "The first day I walked onto set as Lili, I've never felt such scrutiny. That was by a mostly male crew. And you don't know whether you're being judged for whether you're passing, whether you're blending, whether you look ridiculous... Many of the trans women I talked to spoke to me about scrutiny and the gaze and the fear that comes as a consequence of that."

If anything suggests he and Hooper got things right, it was when the director showed an early cut to Jennifer Whyte, a trans-woman and one of his musical directors on *Les Misérables*, who had played the piano for Redmayne's stunning rendition of 'Empty Chairs At Empty Tables'. "First of all, she could hardly speak for five minutes," he recalls. "She said, 'I feel like you've served up a chunk of my own brain back to me.' I hope she doesn't mind me saying, but she felt that it caught moments of her life." She probably won't be alone. **TF**

The Danish Girl opens on 1 January.



Girl time: Einar becomes Lili, and (right) Oola offers Gerda counsel.



**HE'S A CULT ICON AND HE'S MAKING
A COMEBACK WITH THE FAST & FURIOUS
FRANCHISE AND WESTERNS BONE
TOMAHAWK AND THE HATEFUL EIGHT.**

"I'M REALLY PROUD," SAYS

**KURT
RUSSELL**

**"I'M DRAWN TO THESE 'WHOA, WHAT THE
F**K AM I SEEING?!' MOVIES. YOU GET
A PRETTY SWEET BOXSET OUT OF ME."**

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM PORTRAIT MAARTEN DE BOER / CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

KURT RUSSELL



Had he been born in an earlier era, Kurt Russell might have been a star of westerns, his stocky build, craggy face and mane of hair – to say nothing of his air of authority – suggesting a line of sheriffs, ranchers and lone gunslingers would have come his way.

As it is, he's done well by the genre, landing gigs in '60s TV shows *Sugarfoot*, *Gunsmoke* and *The Travels of Jaimie McPheeters* as a kid, and starring as legendary lawman Wyatt Earp in *Tombstone*, one of the most high-profile oaters of the '90s. (It was also whispered that Russell ghost-directed *Tombstone*, a rumour he confirmed after credited helmer George P. Cosmatos died in 2005.)

Quentin Tarantino, of course, has seen all of the above. He can quote passages from Russell's TV shows. And so it was that QT turned to his *Death Proof* star to play John 'The Hangman' Ruth in his ninth movie (and second western – or first if we obey QT's bidding and consider *Django Unchained* a 'Southern') *The Hateful Eight*, the lit-fuse tale of an octet of danger-strangers holed up in an isolated cabin in post-Civil War Wyoming.

"Quentin's a spectacular human being and a spectacular director and writer and filmmaker," says Russell, calling *Total Film* from his home in Los Angeles, where he lives with his partner of 32 years, Goldie Hawn. "He's just a savant who's a blast to work with and he was absolutely at the pinnacle of his abilities – a master in his prime."

But don't let the blizzard of excitement surrounding *The Hateful Eight* distract you from another fine Russell western that's galloping into UK cinemas. *Bone Tomahawk*, by debut writer/director S. Craig Zahler, is the tale of a female doctor (Lili Simmons) kidnapped by a tribe of 'Troglydites' and pursued by four men – Sheriff Franklin Hunt (Russell), Deputy Chicory



QUENTIN HAS INVESTED HIMSELF SERIOUSLY IN THIS. THERE'S MORE HERE THAN FIRST MEETS THE EYE

(Richard Jenkins), moustachioed gunslinger John Brooder (Matthew Fox) and husband Arthur O' Dwyer (Patrick Wilson) – whose quest leads them to unspeakable horrors. Featuring evocative, circuitous dialogue, parched landscapes and a final-act left turn that would have turned John Wayne's hair white, it's *The Searchers* reimagined by the Coens before stumbling into the charnel house of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*.

Bone Tomahawk is a remarkable genre movie in a career full of them. After being the Disney kid in the '70s, Russell found his niche teaming with

John Carpenter (himself a huge fan of westerns) in five movies that include cult classics *Escape From New York*, *The Thing* and *Big Trouble In Little China*. He excelled at playing blue-collar, no-bullshit, take-no-crap men's men, and variations on the same theme saw him threaten to become an A-list star in the late '80s and early '90s, headlining such films as *Tango & Cash*, *Backdraft*, *Tombstone* and *Stargate*. And while his career has soared and plummeted and each reminder of just how good he is – *Breakdown* (1997), *Dark Blue* (2002), the aforementioned *Death Proof* (2007) – failed to see

him then parlay it into a purple patch, he now feels hungrier for work than he has for a while.

Russell weighs his words, a rarity for the 64-year-old actor who's as garrulous as Snake Plissken is terse. "*Fast & Furious 7*, *Bone Tomahawk*, *The Hateful Eight*, *Fast & Furious 8* [due to start shooting in March]," he says, savouring each title. "I consider that a comeback."

***Bone Tomahawk* successfully melds the western with the horror movie...**

I refer to this as a graphic western [laughs]. It gets graphic and it gives me a feeling of *Deliverance*. I never heard anybody try to refer to *Deliverance* as a horror film. What I'm finding is it doesn't have a category. And I love that. That's what I realised when I read it. I thought: this is different; I really want to see this. When you go to the video store, as it were, and you see all your different sections of adventure and romance and comedy-romance and horror and science fiction and westerns... over in the corner, you've got one card up there that has a big question mark and exclamation point, and underneath it is one film: *Bone Tomahawk*.



Straight shooting: Russell plays no-nonsense lawman Franklin Hunt in *Bone Tomahawk*.

What made you trust in Craig, a first-time director?

You don't trust. You hope. Look, the guy wrote it; you believe he can do it. You talk to him. I've done this a few times. Certainly I've done it before. I did it – and was happy to do it – on *Tombstone*, and it went south. I had to take the movie over. We were in real dire straits there. But I was responsible for the money. On this one, it was like, if I said, "OK, let's do this," then the movie was going to get made. So it's a different kind of responsibility.

It must have been a tough shoot, out on those barren locations...

I'll be honest with you – once we started rehearsing and talking about it, there were some pretty tough conversations. The other actors and I made some pretty important points to Craig, because he was going to do some things a different way than we saw it, from what we'd read. And what we all bought into was what we read. I said, "Hey man, if you're not going to do what we read, we're going to have some problems here."

It worked out. Did you fully support Craig in how he wished to portray the extraordinary violence?

Anybody who sees the killing of [spoiler] is not

going to forget it. And it's what makes the movie different. For instance, to have done that with him fully clothed would have been a joke. It would have been bad. And it would have ruined it. We prevailed, and we were able to get it done. I'm just proud of Craig for being a first-time director who got it made, who stuck with it. I think that a lot of his approach to it was really good. The movie has a nice, quiet – what do you call it? – *sparse* feel to it. It gives a sense of authenticity. And if you don't go into the last, say, 40 minutes with authenticity, the movie doesn't matter. But if you do go in there with authenticity... The movie just goes into hyper-violence. Like, "What the fuck are we watching?" But that's what's happening to the people in the movie. They're literally going, "What the fuck is this?"

Was the precision of the dialogue challenging?

You've said before acting is 90 per cent just hitting your mark and saying your line.

Yeah. Listen, unfortunately my sense of humour gets misconstrued sometimes and they take what I have to say seriously. Acting's a lot more than hitting marks and saying lines. I thought it was fantastic dialogue. I thought it could have tremendous impact.

You've got another little western coming up that's sure to make an impact...

It was coincidence. For a couple of years we were trying to get *Bone Tomahawk* made, and then sometimes Richard Jenkins wasn't available, and then I think Matthew Fox at one time couldn't do it, there were a couple of times when I was, "Whoops, I'm not going to be available." It just so happened we started just before rehearsals for Quentin's movie.

In what ways is *The Hateful Eight* a typical Tarantino movie, and in what ways is it different?

He was a man on a mission. He's invested himself more seriously in this. There's a lot more here than at first meets the eye. You've got to watch closely on this one. I love what he has to say, how he says it. This is a western. Not a 'southern', a straight western. He has things he wants to say in his movie, which is set after the Civil War, about the whole situation. There are two genres, I think, that allow us to ask the big questions and talk about them and debate them: science fiction and westerns.

You know a thing or two about science fiction, having starred in *The Thing*...

If you do science fiction really well, it allows you to do things. It allows you to say, "Well, what would happen if something from another planet buried itself in the ice 100,000 years ago and then it gets out? What would happen if it could imitate man or anything that lives?" Then you can tell a story about paranoia. Interestingly enough, Quentin wanted us all to see *The Thing* before we started *The Hateful Eight* because there were things he wanted us to recognise. *The Hateful Eight* is eight people trapped in an environment and they've got to get along. They've got to co-exist.

Surely Quentin didn't make you watch it again?

Yeah, he didn't spare me that [laughs]. He makes you stand there and take your medicine! But, of course, he thinks – it's so sweet – he's bragging >>

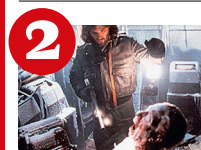
FIVE STAR TURNS

KICK-ASS KURT...



1 ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK 1981 ★★★★★

The former Disney child star first worked with director John Carpenter on TV movie *Elvis* (1979) and won an Emmy nomination. But it was soldier-turned-crim Snake Plissken, busting into a walled-off New York to rescue the US President, that etched his name in history. "He's the most iconic character I've ever played," says Russell.



2 THE THING 1982 ★★★★★

The third of five JC team-ups – *Big Trouble* *In Little China* (ace) and *Escape From LA* (dire) were still to come – saw a bearded, hooded Russell fight a shapeshifting alien in the Antarctic. "John didn't remake *The Thing From Another World*; he made [source novella] *Who Goes There?*" Russell points out. A box-office flop, it became a VHS classic.



3 BACKDRAFT 1991 ★★★

Landing the lead of Chicago firefighter Lt. Stephen 'Bull' McCaffrey after Dennis Quaid passed on the role, Russell headed an ensemble that included Robert De Niro, Donald Sutherland, Jennifer Jason Leigh and, er, William Baldwin. But the real star of Ron Howard's drama is the fiery action: "We were getting burned every day," he recalls.



4 DEATH PROOF 2007 ★★★★★

Russell played murderous driver Stuntman Mike in Quentin Tarantino's half of the *Grindhouse* double bill. As always, the actor did many of his own stunts. "If you were an actor, you had one value; if you were a stunt kid, you had another value; if you could do both, you had greater value," he says of his start-out days.



5 FAST & FURIOUS 7 2015 ★★★★★

Our man's stunning 2015 comeback began with a small but pivotal role as government agent Mr. Nobody in this \$1.5bn-guzzling action juggernaut. "We created this character that's a mystery," he says. "I've got an idea of what Vin wants to do in the future, and this character could be a good part of it." JG

on you. It was the best experience I've ever had on a movie set. A one-off. We all, at the end of it, said, "This will never happen again."

Some claim given you've been working 50 years. You're one of the few child stars who made it as an adult actor...

I got discovered by Walt Disney three years after I had been doing a television series. It was interesting because I had to show I could do the light comedy stuff. Those [Disney movies] were very successful. I never looked at acting as doing it as a kid, or as a teenager, or as an adult. I just looked at it as: Who's the character? Try to do a good job. And I wasn't focused on acting – I was just getting ready to play ball [Russell played *Minor League* baseball until a shoulder injury in 1973]. I was happy to be even making money. I had a real workman's attitude about it. When I was working at Disney, I worked outside of Disney as well. I did a movie with Jimmy Stewart in 1971, at Columbia, called *Fools' Parade*. It was a really different character. A guy was getting out of prison. Falls in love with a prostitute. I was never kept from doing things I wanted to do. I got lucky. When I got hurt out of baseball at 23 years old, I looked at acting seriously and said, "Well, I guess I am going to be doing this."

Listen, I'm not going to say I set out to do that, because I didn't. But it's what's turned out. I've done a lot of them. I'm drawn to them. There's no question: I'm drawn to things that I don't think studios know how to promote, that I don't think the audience is necessarily ready for at that time. *Big Trouble In Little China*. *Escape From New York*. *Tombstone*. *Used Cars*. *Overboard* with Goldie. These movies found their life, their – what do you call it? – *afterlife* – on video. *Captain Ron*, for Christ's sake! It opened up great but the life it had afterwards was 10 times what it was [in cinemas]. I'm really proud. You get a pretty sweet boxset out of Kurt Russell! **At least three of the movies in that boxset would be directed by John Carpenter. What made you guys click?**

John and I started together. We did *Elvis* first. I was 28, and he was about 30. It was just right after he'd done *Halloween*. We were really young guys. We were on an airplane one time. We were talking about this and that, having an interesting conversation. He either said to me or I said to him, "The phrase 'no man is an island' – do you buy that?" Whoever asked the question, the answer from both of us was, "No, I don't believe that no man is an island. I think you can be an

Snakes alive: Russell makes his point in *Escape From New York*.



BIG TROUBLE'S STYLE, ITS KIND OF IRREVERENT HUMOUR, WAS EMBRACED BY A GENERATION

And might it all culminate in your first Oscar nomination for *The Hateful Eight*? Tarantino has built up a track record of directing actors to awards...

This is a great group of actors who are all on top of their game. But you absolutely don't think about that because there's no point in it. It has nothing to do with the process of what we're in. Listen, I don't know what that gains you, so I've got no interest in it. It would be a dangerous, horrible expectation game to play that you're probably only going to be disappointed in. I'm satisfied with the fact that the audience sees my movies and loves them, truly loves them to a cult status. That's a great thing to have – the people who really get it, really get it. **Do you prefer being a cult icon to being a mainstream hero?**

island. You can be an island for a long, wonderful time." I think we connected on that level. To me, that said a lot. He's comfortable in that way, I'm comfortable in that way.

Snake Plissken is an island. Did you ever think he'd become an icon while making *Escape From New York*?

No. I'd done a lot with the costume myself. John had turned a lot over to me in terms of that stuff. But there was one big part of Snake that I didn't have – his sound. I was just looking at Snake in terms of it being a futuristic movie. I was a little inspired in my head by Kraftwerk at the time. I don't know. And then we did the first scene and I knew what I was going to do. Lee Van Cleef had been cast as Hawk, and I thought, "OK, I've got this now." I never said anything to John. So, it's the first take and

I think my line was, "Congratulations, you're a millionaire." I told the soundman, "You're gonna need to get in real tight because I'm going to be very, very hard to hear." So I did the line: [In a Plissken hiss] "Congratulations, you're a millionaire." And cut. John came up to me and said, "This is going to be fucking great. This guy is going to be *fucking great*." [laughs] **You came up with the eye patch, right?** I said to John, "I'd love to wear an eye patch." He said, "Get it! It's a cool idea." I said, "Yeah, something happened to him in Siberia, man [laughs]. He's always in pain in his eye. He's got radiation in there or something. Or maybe he can see out of that eye. Who knows?" But John liked that. Then the studio was a little freaked out. They said, "Wait a minute, the lead guy's going to cover half his face?" [laughs]

LIFELINE

MARCH 1951

Born in Springfield, Massachusetts to actor Bing and dancer Louise Julia.

1963-1964

Movie debut in Elvis vehicle *It Happened At The World's Fair*, appeared in episode of *The Fugitive*.

1966

Signed 10-year Disney contract. Also played *Minor League* baseball in early '70s.



1979-1986

Appeared in four John Carpenter movies; Golden Globe nommed for *Silkwood*; started dating Goldie Hawn (1983).



What's your opinion on the planned remakes of *Escape From New York* and *Big Trouble In Little China*, and the prequel of *The Thing*?

John and I did a remake of *The Thing*. I don't think there's anything that's sacred. The reason John wanted to do *The Thing* was he felt *The Thing* that had been made in 1951 was one version that you could do that was based on a book called *Who Goes There?* He said, "That's not what I'm doing. My movie's about paranoia." Granted, the monster was horrific – that's the genre – but the story's great because it's literally about how screwed up in your mind can you get? Can you get to the point where you've asked yourself, "Are you, you? Am I me?" That's the reason, to me, to make a remake. I can't speak for whoever's going to make the remakes but the directors have got their hands full. John

and I did some pretty different stuff.

Like *The Thing*, *Big Trouble In Little China* flopped but became a classic on video...

That was a very different movie for its time. There was not that sense of humour out there. They'd never seen a movie where a guy kisses a girl and when he comes back, he's got lipstick on – he's the lead guy and he doesn't know! You'd never seen a lead guy who just doesn't know he's not very good at stuff, and actually the sidekick is the lead. John had great karate stuff in it, very beautiful, many years before *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, or whatever [laughs]. It was a look that was in John's mind, and since then, it's been embraced by many filmmakers. That style, that kind of irreverent humour, it was embraced by an entire generation. Anyway, my point is,

hey, good luck with the remake; hope you come up with something great.

Looking to your own future, can we expect to see you in *Fast & Furious 8*?

They're talking about getting going in March. The last time I talked to Vin, he was excited about it, excited about me being a part of it. So I'll get involved and we'll see what happens. Yeah, I mean, it's a great outfit. It was a really sad thing to see Paul go. He was a terrific guy. I was with him four days before it happened. It was sad, sad, sad. But they really did honour him. That was the right thing to do. They're a fun bunch and a good bunch. So we'll see where that goes.

It's just been announced that it will be set in New York.

Yeah? That's interesting to me because Vin did talk to me about some of the things he wanted to do, and hearing you say that – which is, by the way, the first I've heard – actually clues me in to some of what we might be doing.

Your career has had ups and downs. But with *Fast & Furious 7*, *Bone Tomahawk* and *The Hatef Eight*, you're on a hot streak...

Yeah. [Before those movies] I basically took some time off. I didn't care for what I was reading and my wine was doing great. GoGi Wines is a brand that I've been making for eight years now. It's not a hobby. I'm very serious about it. It's starting to connect at all the Disney venues. In Adventureland at Disney, they have an al fresco lounge where my wine is with a bunch of seven or eight other Disney people who have made wine. Good restaurants, and the same thing in Disney World. So, a couple of projects I kind of went, "Meh, OK, whatever." And then I started reading things that I *did* like. Did I want to go to work again or did I want to stick my head back in the hole? I thought, 'What the hell. I'm making a full swing.' Though I only do things with a number in it – *Fast & Furious 7*, *The Hatef Eight*, *Fast & Furious 8*!

Which leads us to the million-dollar question: will we ever see *Overboard 2*?

[Laughs] That's one of those movies they've talked about and said, "What would it be 25 years later? What would they be doing? What did their lives turn into?" The discussion has happened many times. Goldie said the other day, "Oh, I don't think I'm quite done yet. I think I might do some other stuff in the movie business." So she's drifting back into that world, and I've come back head-first. I'm not going to be the one to sit down and write it! But if I read it and go, "Hey, that's funny..."

***The Hatef Eight* opens on 8 January.**

***Bone Tomahawk* opens in January (TBC).**

1989-1994

Hotstreak: *Tango & Cash*, *Backdraft*, *Tombstone*, *Stargate*, and voiced Elvis in *Forrest Gump*.



1996-1998

Action man in *Escape From LA*, *Breakdown* and home video hit *Soldier*.



2006-2007

Dived into disaster pic *Poseidon* and got his grindhouse on for QT's *Death Proof*.

2015-2016

Returns to the spotlight with *Fast & Furious 7*, *Bone Tomahawk* and *The Hatef Eight*.

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Master minds

Pixar takes us on the ultimate head-trip.

INSIDE OUT U

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT 23 NOVEMBER DVD, BD, 3D BD



WHO BETTER THAN PIXAR TO tell us what's going on inside our own heads? The company has been doing it, on and off, since 1995 – making us fall in love with pull-string cowboys, pine for lost clownfish and bawl our eyes out at cranky old men in flying houses. Not that Pixar is always right. With an impossible string of hits spanning 20 years, its recent run saw the studio's crown start to slip – loosened even more by an upcoming slate stuffed with sequels. But before Pixar starts opening up its old worlds, director Pete Docter narrows down a new one to craft the studio's smallest, subtlest, most mature film to date.

Essentially the story of an 11-year-old having her first mental breakdown, Pixar's approach to metaphysics is absurdly grown-up on paper. With no rollercoaster set-pieces, no cute sidekicks and no major characters who aren't all versions of the same person, it's not much more kiddie-friendly on screen. But that's not to say *Inside Out* doesn't work as a family film. Visually astounding, hilariously written and perfectly pitched to every seat in the house, it's *Charlie And The Chocolate Factory* meets Charlie Kaufman – high-concepts from a child's-eye view; emotional gut-punches wrapped in candyfloss; a sensory theme park.

Formerly of *Monsters, Inc.* and *Up*, Docter arguably has the best track-record at Pixar.

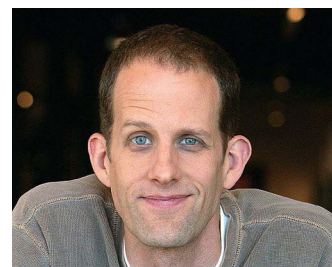
Leading the disc's deep-reaching commentary (and making a few live phone calls to various members of the cast and crew as he goes), the director tells us the idea took shape when he heard his own bubbly 11-year-old labelled "a quiet kid" by her teachers.

It's all in the mind

Already responsible for replacing Bambi's dead mum as the new go-to test for cold-heartedness, Docter's own opening montage of *Up* is an impossible act to follow. Trying anyway, *Inside Out* begins with nothing less than the birth of human consciousness – introducing us to Riley and her newborn Emotion, Joy, in their first formative moments. Skipping through the next 11 years, the inside of Riley's head becomes a fairground of imagination, a repository of memories and a fully furnished flight-deck for her five guiding Emotions to bicker over the controls.

The basics (which aren't basic at all) are elegantly explained – Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger

Q&A



PETE DOCTER

Inside Out's brainbox director talks Brad Bird, blank slates and *Boyhood*...

You must have had a lot of yellow joy marbles in your head when you read the reviews...

You tell yourself it doesn't matter – we worked hard and we're proud of it – but it *does* matter. You desperately want everyone to like it. So yeah, I couldn't be happier.

Were you ever worried that audiences might not get it?

This one was actually more concrete of a pitch than *Up*. [Puts on his best announcer voice] "An old man's wife dies, see, and then he flies his house to South America with balloons..." To me, this was a light-bulb moment – *everyone* has emotions, so why hasn't someone made this already? But I do remember Brad Bird saying, "That's a great idea! I'm glad you're doing it and not me!"

The abstract world gave you scope to do whatever you wanted – was that a good thing or a bad thing?

Yes. [laughs] It was ultimately a great thing, because we had a blank slate. But on the other hand, there were *endless* variables. We ended up having discussions about everything.

Were there any ideas that didn't make the cut?

Yeah, there were a few things. I always loved the idea of the Stream Of Consciousness; I think we had that as the route to the subconscious at one point. They were all little gags though, the underlying structure stayed the same throughout.

***Riley's First Date* continues the story – could this be Pixar's *Boyhood*?**

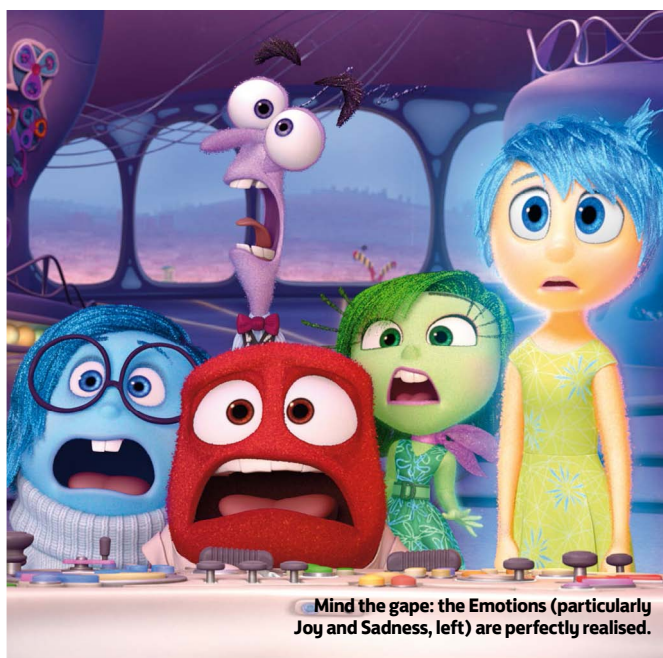
Ha! I don't think I've got the energy for that. We've talked about some things but we're always more attracted by the idea of exploring new stuff – so we haven't really put too much thought into a sequel. **PB**



'Visually astounding, hilariously written and perfectly pitched'

and Disgust appealing to kids in primary colours and basic shapes, handling the machinery of Riley's mind via a set of glowing marbles. Somehow it all makes sense just in time for everything to start going wrong – Riley thrown into free-fall when her mum and dad move her across country to a new home, sending Joy and Sadness on a psychological rescue mission through her crumbling synapses.

Leave the kids in front of the TV whilst you make the tea and you'll come back to characters sobbing aboard a Train Of Thought, teetering over disappearing Islands Of Imagination or talking about "non-objective fragmentation" in an abstract 2D ether. Giant, nightmarish clowns trap heroes in cages made of balloons, dreams are rendered in working TV studios and Riley suffers a painfully real anxiety attack in the middle of her new classroom. And then there's the subtext – suggesting that what we lose in childhood never *actually* comes back. Bold, big ideas for



Mind the gap: the Emotions (particularly Joy and Sadness, left) are perfectly realised.

an art-house film, it's borderline revolutionary for Pixar – which somehow manages to keep the kids (and Disney) happy with some of its sweetest, most imaginative storytelling to date.

Mixed feelings

Leading the parade is Joy, constantly lifting the spirit of the film as Riley's cheerleading Jiminy Cricket, giddily voiced by Amy Poehler and drawn like a burst of sunshine. The other Emotions are equally well scouted from sitcoms and standup; Phyllis Smith's moeey blue blob, Bill Hader's nervy purple stick, Mindy Kaling's prissy green triangle; and Lewis Black's hot-headed red briquette. Equal star is Richard Kind's polka-dotted nougat-filled elephant-headed imaginary friend Bing-Bong, who serves as Tin Man, Lion and Scarecrow on the Yellow Brick Road to Riley's recovery – and who provides Docter with yet *another* lump-in-the-throat moment that people will probably never forgive him for.

Not that the film isn't full of them. Without any action set-pieces to add punctuation, it's the emotional highs and lows that power the movie from scene to scene – understated enough to foreground minimal, sophisticated animation over exaggeration and bombast, light and bright enough for the kids not to notice. Scaled back not just in its micro-interiors but in the focus of its design, *Inside Out* represents a small step for Pixar and a giant leap for animated filmmaking as a whole.

"In the end," says Docter, as the credits roll, "I'm proud of the statement this movie makes. In a world where we try to avoid sadness, where we medicate it, this movie reminds us how important sadness is – reminds us of the richness, warmth and complexity that it brings."

Damn it, Docter. There's something in our eye again... **Paul Bradshaw**

EXTRAS > Commentary > Shorts



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

INNERSPACE 1987
Joe Dante marries screwball laughs with FX action as miniature Dennis Quaid gets stuck in Martin Short's body.

WALL STREET 1987
Size matters for Michael Douglas' mean mentor. All together now: "Greed is good."

THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN 2011
Ant-Man writers Edgar Wright and Joe Cornish's first outing with a compact crime-fighter.

For full reviews of these films visit totalfilm.com/cinema_reviews



Magic Marvel XXS

A more down-to-earth hero...

Just then, his hang glider turned completely invisible.

ANT-MAN 12

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT 30 NOVEMBER DVD, BD, 3D BD, DIGITAL HD



IN A SUMMER IN WHICH blockbusters consistently equated bigger with better – “more teeth,” in *Jurassic World*'s pithy terminology – *Ant-Man* stood out for demanding that audiences bring their dental mirrors. Credit Marvel for the savvy to dodge expectations, especially after delivering *Avengers: Age Of Ultron*, one of the biggest (some would say stodgiest) of 2015's crop. Here, a shrunken superhero is “wow enough”.

Admittedly, it didn't feel like that prior to *Ant-Man*'s arrival. If the premise didn't already make it an underdog, a much-reported directorial departure left the studio's 12th movie looking somewhat unheralded. Yet, like its diminutive hero, the film uses that element of surprise to its advantage. We'll never know what original helmer Edgar Wright might have brought, and perhaps the limits of Marvel's experimentation have been reached. Yet don't forget that Wright's replacement Peyton Reed has form for likeability (*Bring It On*) and visual invention (*Down With Love*).

Ant-Man fizzles with similar warmth and brio.

Freed from MCU continuity, the film runs parallel to Marvel's A-list, be it Michael Douglas' Hank Pym holding out on S.H.I.E.L.D. to Scott Lang (Paul Rudd) besting a familiar face during a training mission. It shares something of *Guardians Of The Galaxy*'s insouciance, without being dragged down by any guff about Infinity Stones. Here, the stakes are much – yes – smaller.

It takes time, though. The opening stretches are weighed down by soon-to-be partners-in-crime Pym and Lang's dual backstories. Where *Guardians* threw its gang together with breathless impatience, *Ant-Man* studiously details both Pym's battle to protect his shrinking secret from amoral protégé Darren Cross (Corey Stoll), and Lang's attempts to seek redemption as a dad. The pace flags but the faults are structural; it's unclear what Wright might have done differently, or better.

An ace break-in sequence raises the film's intelligence via Lang's ingeniously leftfield approach to locks. Suddenly, the extensive story

building makes sense: this film delights in tearing down the established edifices of Marvel movies and rebuilding to suit the changing scale.

With moments of science both plausible (greater density brings ant-like strength) and implausible (communication with ants via vibratory earpieces), Lang's adoption of the Ant-Man suit is a hoot. Yet each joke progresses his tactical nous; compared to the Avengers' brawn, Lang absolutely requires nimbleness in movement, timing and thought, giving a satisfyingly cerebral thrill to the action.

So Rudd and Reed's union delivers a breezy character comedy, a caper movie that happens to revolve around a fantastic(ally small) hero. Rudd nails the irreverent tone required, aided by an admirably self-deprecating Douglas and a wryly sceptical Evangeline Lilly, although Michael Peña steals proceedings as Lang's hyper-enthusiastic pal. With entire sequences shot and edited to Peña's manic jabber, Marvel brings fresh meaning to calls for “more teeth”. Modest extras take in C-3PO impersonations, the importance of dust motes and Reed badgering an evasive Rudd to reveal which side he's on in the upcoming *Civil War*. **Simon Kinnear**

EXTRAS > Commentary (BD) > Featurettes (BD)
> Deleted/extended scenes (BD) > Gag reel (BD)

Miss Shumer's
on the right track.

Bel Amy

Movie stardom? The Schu fits...

TRAINWRECK ¹⁵

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT 7 DECEMBER DVD, BD, DIGITAL HD



THE RISE OF AMY SCHUMER'S star is complete. Having already struck viral gold with her zeitgeist-skewering sketch show *Inside Amy Schumer*, she proves her mettle both as screenwriter and leading lady with *Trainwreck*.

Schumer's journalist heroine Amy blends the star's party-girl standup persona with a female variation on director Judd Apatow's familiar slacker-bro protagonist. She works hard, plays hard and eschews commitment for casual sex. Assigned to interview Bill Hader's endearingly strait-laced sports doctor Aaron, Amy questions her lifestyle for the first time.

Though Apatow's over-indulgent editing is in evidence, his co-scripting with Schumer makes for sharp, thrilling screwball patter. Amy and Aaron are a couple you can't help but root for, their fights as convincing as their witty courtship, and the greatest surprise of Schumer's

performance is how deftly she sells the emotional beats alongside the comedic.

But *Trainwreck* also mines its supporting cast. Brie Larsen spins gold out of the potentially one-note role of Amy's more traditional sister, and LeBron James is unexpectedly hilarious as Aaron's unlikely BFF. The men's mag at which Amy works is populated by perfectly executed caricatures, with Tilda Swinton's acerbic editor the standout, and the less you know about Daniel Radcliffe's offbeat cameo the better it is.

Buoyed by smart performances, detailed writing, gloriously random humour and the kind of warm romcom connection we just don't see much of any more, *Trainwreck* is a delight. The Blu-ray boasts a feature-length Making Of, 45 mins of deleted scenes... Even the gag reel's a two-parter. **Emma Dibdin**

EXTRAS > Extended cut > Commentary > Deleted/extended scenes > Making Of (BD) > Short film (BD) > Featurettes (BD) > Gag reel



SHARKNADO 3: OH HELL NO! ¹⁵

Film ★☆☆☆☆ Extras ★★★★★

OUT 23 NOVEMBER DVD, VOD

THE "SO BAD IT'S GOOD" PHENOMENON is a curious thing. Somehow it's OK to laugh at filmmakers if they try their best, but when they fail on purpose it just feels hollow. Such is *Sharknado 3*. Now existing as a cut-price parody of the kind of action films that haven't been made for 20 years, it sees Fin Shepard (Ian Ziering) fight the fish-slurping twister from the White House to outer space – joined by the usual sad list of cult cameos (David Hasselhoff et al). Don't encourage them. **Paul Bradshaw**

EXTRAS > Commentary > Featurettes > Gag reel > Extended scenes



MAGIC MIKE XXL ¹⁵

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT 30 NOVEMBER DVD, BD

OILED PECS AND THRUSTING PELVISES abound in this second helping of male-stripper bromance, which sees Channing Tatum hook up once more with his beefy old pals for a road trip enlivened en route by Andie McDowell and Jada Pinkett Smith. Sadly, though, no sign of Matthew McConaughey – and little of Steven Soderbergh, whose professional handling of the editing and lensing isn't enough of a substitute for the truth and rawness he brought to the original as director. Great dance moves, shame about the plot. Skippy extras. **Neil Smith**

EXTRAS > Featurettes > Extended dance scene (BD)



THEEB ¹⁵

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD

SHOT ON LOCATION IN JORDAN, WITH a cast of nearly all non-professionals, Naji Abu Nowar's debut feature is set in a province of the Ottoman Empire during WW1. Theeb (Jacir Eid) is a young boy living with his Bedouin tribe. Into their oasis comes a British officer (Jack Fox) needing a guide, and Theeb's adored older brother volunteers. Unbidden, the lad tags along – but danger and death lie in wait. The desert landscapes look stunning, and it's through Theeb's gaze, alert but not always fully comprehending, that the story's conveyed. Elemental filmmaking, rich in nuance. **Philip Kemp**

EXTRAS > None



MINIONS ^U

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, 3D BD, BD, DIGITAL HD

THE RISE OF THE SIDEKICKS CONTINUES with Despicable Gru's hindersers, whose spin-off snaffled \$1bn-plus returns without even a plot to hand. The secret to directors Kyle Balda and Pierre Coffin's evil genius? Gags (well, and merch...), rapid-fired for short attention spans. What story there is follows the trouble-causers' global pursuit of villains to pledge service to; enter Sandra Bullock's Scarlet Overkill. Pacing and purpose exit fast, but blithely anarchic in-jokes and a Minion-chorus soundtrack keep the laughs lively. Bonus 'mini-movies' underwhelm. **Kevin Harley**

EXTRAS > Mini-movies > Interactive map (BD) > Featurettes (BD) > Xmas song



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

ALIENS: SPECIAL EDITION 1992

This time, it's... more. More drool! More alien limbs flying! James Cameron blazes a trail.

KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: DIRECTOR'S CUT 2005

Ridley Scott's Crusades epic regains 45 minutes – including backstories that explain stuff.

BLADE RUNNER: THE FINAL CUT 2007

Scott gives tinkering a good name, fixing up some long-standing gaffes.

For full reviews of these films visit totalfilm.com/cinema_reviews

Beorn to run

Jackson goes the extra distance one last time...

Gandalf came to the worrying realisation that he'd brought a stick to a bow fight.

THE HOBBIT: THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES EXTENDED EDITION 12 (TBC)

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT 23 NOVEMBER DVD, 3D BD, DIGITAL HD



IT ALL COMES BACK TO RINGS... As Gandalf prepares to lose his ring-wearing hand to an orc, Peter Jackson chats on the commentary about how the three rings of power subplot has come alive in the extended editions: one seed among many for Middle-earth's extended lease of disc-life.

You'd call it a cash-in, if the 20 additional minutes on display here didn't make for an imperfect but noticeably less wobbly bridge to *Rings* than the theatrical cut. Previously, *Battle* felt prequel-ish and awkwardly paced: lots of army assemblage, lots of battles, not much logic or character flow. Here, the logic creases are smoothed out, the character/action thrusts better integrated.

Improvements begin quickly, with Bard's Smaug face-off boosted for tension. The Making

Of does reveal that Luke Evans spent 15 hours dashing over rooftops on his first day at work, so that's at least one person who'll be satisfied with the extra footage. Equally, James Nesbitt's Bofur's chat-time with Martin Freeman's flawless Bilbo is fleeting but welcome: their exchange lets the pacing breathe, shows that Jackson can still do character stuff and reminds us the dwarves have, you know, actual voices.

Elsewhere, Billy Connolly's formerly-botched entrance is bettered, Bifur's axe-in-head issue is comically resolved (he speaks!) and Beorn is briefly dumped into battle. It's a bloodier battle in this US R-rated cut, sometimes pointlessly: when you've seen one head roll... But fun additions include Galadriel reducing an orc to "wet chunks" (Jackson's choice words) and a troll-squishing ice chase that clears up the

mystery of the chariot in the trailer. Tauriel's fate remains an unfortunately unresolved mystery, for which the explanation behind Legolas' shifting position while hanging from a giant bat hardly compensates. But at least the extra farewell to Thorin doesn't muddy the climax: the glide into *The Fellowship Of The Ring* stays smooth so it won't ruin that six-pic Christmas binge you're planning.

Set aside an extra day too, because the Philippa Boyens/Jackson yack-track ("You just wanted to do giant were-worms," she joshes, genially) and mammoth docs brim with treasures. Cherishable footage includes Christopher Lee on set, Cate Blanchett protecting her nipper from orc-mares and footage from day one of *Rings*. Cast'n'crew look about 10, bless 'em. As a full-circle swerve back to that hallowed start, this *Battle* certainly comes closer than before (much closer than a certain other prequel trilogy managed...) to a worthy segue-as-send-off for a great fantasy saga. Unless someone comes up with a post-Tolkien excuse for a 2025 extension: "The Forge Awakens"? **Kevin Harley**

EXTRAS > Commentary > Documentaries > Featurettes
> Music video



SONG OF THE SEA PG

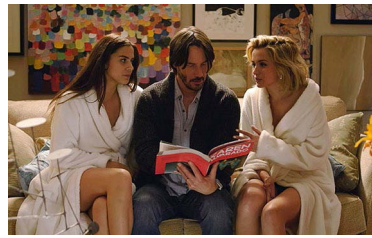
Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, DIGITAL HD

DIRECTOR TOMM MOORE'S BOLD, enchanting Oscar-nominated animation mixes Celtic legend into a grabby, family-friendly adventure, in which seven-year-old Ben and little sister Saoirse struggle to use the latter's magical 'selkie' powers to save their family. There's a Miyazaki feel (*Ponyo*, particularly) in the storytelling, combined with gorgeous landscapes, serious themes, and dark folklore. Yet the stunning hand-drawn 2D visuals are fluid and funky, their painterly patterns sweeping the twisty story along. Lively voicework by David Rawle (*Moone Boy*) as Ben gives the film a delightful cheekiness and emotional honesty. **Kate Stables**

EXTRAS ▶ Commentary ▶ Featurettes

▶ Art cards (BD)



KNOCK KNOCK 18

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD

ELI ROTH'S FATAL ATTRACTION FOR the Instagram age sees happily married Keanu Reeves make the beast with three backs with a pair of nymphets (Lorenza Izzo, Ana de Armas) who knock at his door one stormy night, only for the chicks to come home to roost – refusing to leave, they set about trashing his home and his life. Best viewed as a black comedy, *Knock Knock* sees Roth slipping into the mainstream but still going gleefully all the way, and contains some of Reeves' best bad acting in years: his "Free pizza!" tirade manages to match the camp glory of *Mommie Dearest*'s "No wire hangers!" **Jamie Graham**

EXTRAS ▶ Interviews



ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING 12

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT 7 DECEMBER DVD, BD, DIGITAL HD

ROBIN WILLIAMS' FINAL FILM ROLE... the first movie to unite all the Pythons since '83's *The Meaning Of Life*... Terry Jones' first directing gig in a decade... Alas, this cosmic comedy isn't half the event it sounds on paper. Simon Pegg plays Neil, a singleton teacher bestowed by aliens with the power to make anything happen. With the Pythons collectively voicing the extraterrestrials, it's a shame this sporadically amusing but ultimately infantile nonsense might be the last time the old gang get together. Even sadder is the end-credits footage of Robin Williams voicing Pegg's dog; he surely deserved a better swansong. **James Mottram**

EXTRAS ▶ Featurettes ▶ Interviews



ENTOURAGE: THE MOVIE 15

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, DIGITAL HD

AFTER 96 HBO EPISODES, MOVIE STAR Vincent Chase (Adrian Grenier) and his boys – half-brother Drama (Kevin Dillon), manager Eric (Kevin Connolly) and driver/gofer Turtle (Jerry Ferrara) – have finally made it in Hollywood with their own movie. How very meta. Fans of the show will enjoy the reunion, as super-agent Ari Gold (Jeremy Renner), now running a studio, funds Vince's \$100m directorial debut to disastrous effect; newcomers might not spy the bros' sweet natures through the bludgeoning satire, star cameos and bikini-clad babes. Misogynistic or portraying a misogynistic world? Only you can decide. **Jamie Graham**

EXTRAS ▶ Featurettes (BD)

▶ Deleted scenes (BD) ▶ Gag reel (BD)



THE FINAL GIRLS 15

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD

IMAGINE IF FRIDAY THE 13TH MET *Pleasantville* down a dark alley. That's the nutshell premise of this stylish deconstruction of the slasher genre, which isn't as clever as it wants to be, but still very funny and – beneath all the self-awareness – surprisingly emotional. As Max (Taissa Farmiga) grieves the death of her cult actress mother (Malin Akerman), she and her friends get sucked into the very same summer-camp horror movie that made her mother's name. The meta-movie commentary isn't as insightful as the satire of, say, *Scream*, but the laughs roll just as often as the severed heads. **Matt Looker**

EXTRAS ▶ Commentary ▶ Deleted scenes

▶ FX reel ▶ Shooting notes



TED 2 15

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

OUT 23 NOVEMBER DVD, BD, DIGITAL HD

SETH MCFARLANE'S SEQUEL TO HIS HIT (thunder) buddy comedy is tediously mean-spirited. This time out, with best pal John (Mark Wahlberg) and rookie lawyer Samantha (Amanda Seyfried) in his corner, the titular bear is fighting for his civil rights while generally punching down anyone who isn't straight, white and male. Yet there are saving graces; namely a fantastic cameo from Liam Neeson and a scene where Ted torments an improv comedy troupe with grim suggestions for sketches. Extended edition adds six minutes of filth, while Blu bonuses include the self-explanatory 'Giant Opening Dance Number'. **Stephen Kelly**

EXTRAS ▶ Commentary ▶ Featurettes

▶ Deleted scenes (BD) ▶ Gag reel (BD)

The round-up

Shaggy, Santa and (really) bad science.

Scooby-Doo! And Kiss: Rock And Roll Mystery (★★★, out now, DVD) is a mutt/metal mash-up that somehow works. Basically a fan-friendly Kiss piss-take, with a silly mystery about a Crimson Witch driving random gags about Gene Simmons' appetites, Shaggy's musical armpit, etc. Maybe cover the kids' ears for the song 'Don't Touch My Ascot'...

Father Christmas gets banged up in **Get Santa** (★★★, out now, DVD/BD), which lacks the sparkle to become a Yuletide perennial like *Elf*, but ensures there's gifts for adults (in-jokes, cynical Rafe Spall) as well as kids (farting reindeer)...



How far would you go to renovate your house? In adequate thriller **Good People** (★★, out now, DVD/BD), marrieds Kate Hudson and James Franco steal £220,000 from a dead druglord. Things only get interesting when it morphs into a weird, gritty *Home Alone* clone...

Good news! In **The Lazarus Effect** (★★, out now, DVD/BD/Digital HD), scientists have invented a serum that can revive the dead. Bad news: they come back as evil superhumans. Worse news: try as she might, Olivia Wilde can't breathe life into this horror, which clunks its way through cliché after cliché.



Last and least, we have **Fury: The Tales Of Ronan Pierce** (★, out now, DVD/BD), a messy revenge-noir abomination that's nowhere near as cool as its *Hobo With A Shotgun*-esque poster...

Extras

The other stuff we're excited about this month...

SPECTRE

SOUNDTRACK **OUT NOW**

Sex, style, mystery, exotica. All the good 00-stuff that Sam Smith's theme tune lacked is present in scoring veteran Thomas Newman's hands, with added Danny Elfman-ish flutters on tracks like 'Silver Wraith'. The burn is sultry to start, the pleasure teasingly measured in vintage style. Such restraint lends punch to the electro-charged 'Backfire' and percussive 'Snow Plane'. 'Day Of The Dead', meanwhile, sounds like Basement Jaxx are on hand. The instrumental version of Smith's low-wattage theme dulls the attack, but momentum returns for a dynamic drive towards 'Westminster Bridge': tense, pulsing proof of Newman's 00-status.



HALO 5: GUARDIANS

GAME **OUT NOW**

Yes, it's that time again. Things that this return of Xbox's biggest series does well: incredible sci-fi locations, moreish multiplayer, having the Master Chief in. Things it does less well: story (it's mostly daft cliché), enemies (the Prometheans just aren't that fun to shoot), and character – mostly you play as the new Spartan Locke rather than Master Chief, because lessons learnt from *Halo 2*: none). This is still blockbuster stuff, but not the flawless return fans needed after the disappointment of last year's *Master Chief Collection*.



THE IRON GIANT THROW BLANKET

HOME FURNISHING **OUT DECEMBER**

It's hard to believe that on release in 1999, *The Iron Giant* was a flop. But now, 16 years later, it's the beloved cult classic it always deserved to be. Hence the steady stream of cool new merch hitting the market, including a trio of tapestry-style throw blankets sporting neat *Iron Giant* poster art. All measure 58 x 36 inches and can be hung on a wall... or cuddled up to like a loveable robot.

BATMAN EGG CUP AND TOAST STAMP

BREAKFAST UTENSILS **OUT NOW**



A serious superhero needs a serious breakfast, so may we recommend your morning egg come dressed in a Batman cup and your toast be transformed into a Batsignal? You can do both with Popcultcha's breakfast duo that will make the morning after the dark night before feel a lot more super.

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION PLAYING CARDS

CARDS **OUT NOW**

Chrimbo is a-coming, which means family (wanted and... less wanted) will descend, demanding entertainment. Start with these *Vacation*-themed playing cards from Aquarius that show off the entire beloved Griswold clan. Whatever you play with them, we just hope you've got slightly better luck than Clark.



TOTAL FILM competition



OUT NOW
ON DVD,
BLU-RAY AND
STEELBOOK



WIN! AN LED TV AND BLU-RAY PLAYER WITH BETTER CALL SAUL!

More often than not, prequels disappoint. Not so in the case of *Better Call Saul*, despite having to live up to one of the greatest shows in TV history, *Breaking Bad*. Bob Odenkirk reprises his role as criminal (in every sense) attorney Saul Goodman in an origin-story saga that scored one of the biggest series premieres in US cable history and seven Emmy nominations – not to mention a five-star review from *TF* (see last issue), in which we sang the praises of, amongst other things, its “mordant wit, suspenseful plotting and surreal touches”.

Better Call Saul is set to return early next year, so now's the perfect time to catch up with Season 1, available right now on DVD, Blu-ray and Steelbook,

and packing extras including commentaries, featurettes, deleted scenes and gag reel. To celebrate, we're offering one lucky reader a cracking prize: a 32-inch LED TV, Blu-ray player and copy of *Better Call Saul* Season 1 on Blu-ray. For a chance to win, visit www.futurecompetitions.com/TF240 and answer the question below:

Which *Spinal Tap* legend also stars in *Better Call Saul*?

- A Christopher Guest
- B Harry Shearer
- C Michael McKean

TO ENTER ONLINE HEAD TO WWW.FUTURECOMPETITIONS.COM/TF240

TERMS & CONDITIONS You can enter this competition at any time between 20 November and 17 December 2015 by entering online at www.futurecompetitions.com/TF240. By taking part in the competition you agree to the Competition Rules which are summarised below but can be viewed in full at www.futurenet.com/futureonline/competitionrules.asp. By entering you confirm you are happy to receive details of future offers and promotions from Future Publishing Ltd and carefully selected third parties. If you do not want to receive information relating to future offers and promotions, follow the instructions online. Competition helpline number 01225 442244. Late or incomplete entries will be disqualified. Entries must be submitted by an individual (not via any agency or similar) and, unless otherwise stated, are limited to one per household. The Company reserves the right in its sole discretion to substitute any prize with cash or a prize of comparable value. Unless otherwise stated, the Competition is open to all GB residents of 18 years and over, except employees of Future Publishing (including freelancers) and any party involved in the competition or their households. By entering a Competition you give permission to use your name, likeness and personal information in connection with the Competition and for promotional purposes. If you are a winner, you may have to provide additional information. Details of winners will be available on request within three months of the closing date. If you are a winner, receipt by you of any prize is conditional upon you complying with (amongst other things) the Competition Rules. You acknowledge and agree that neither the Company nor any associated third parties shall have any liability to you in connection with your use and/or possession of your prize.

ON DEMAND NEW

ON DEMAND

The pick of the films and shows to stream and download this month...

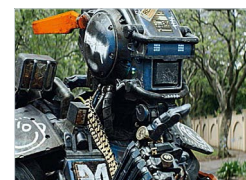


The Netflix wing of the MCU expands this month with the debut of *Jessica Jones*, based on *Alias* (not that one) and set in *Daredevil*'s neck of the woods. All 13 one-hour episodes will be available from 20 Nov – read more on p138 (here's a preview: “...lots of fights and cool stunts and shit”).

Also making its bow on 20 Nov (via Amazon Prime) is the full season of *The Man In The High Castle*, the Ridley Scott-produced adap of Philip K. Dick's fêted novel imagining a world in which the Nazis won. Fingers crossed the 10 episodes will deliver on the promise of January's pilot...

December 11 marks the return of Amazon's Golden Globe-bagging show with *Transparent: Season 2* (a third season's already been confirmed, so get on board). Movie-wise, Amazon's offerings include quality anthology *Wild Tales* (2014, ★★★★★), unitards-and-tragedy stunner *Foxcatcher* (2014, ★★★★★) and *Fast Five* (2011, ★★★★★), in which The Rock drives the series to new heights of plausibility-shoeing motor-tainment.

And at Sky Movies On Demand, newbies include Jennifer Aniston's layered performance in *Cake* (2014, ★★★★★), Will Smith/Margot Robbie romantic con-eddy *Focus* (2015, ★★★★★) and two fairy tale retellings: Kenneth Branagh's *Cinderella* (2015, ★★★★★) and *Chappie* (2015, ★★★★★), which is *Pinocchio* with more bling and swearing.





Crimson peak

Good suffering, soon to be wasted...

HELLRAISER: SCARLET BOX 18

HELLRAISER/ HELLBOUND/ HELL ON EARTH

Films ★★★★★ / ★★★★★ / ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1987-1992 OUT 7 DECEMBER BD

IT'S NOT EVEN FROM MY butt-hole," tweeted a fuming Clive Barker in 2011, lest anyone thought that year's excremental ninth *Hellraiser* movie came from "the mind of" the series' forefather. Arrow's lavish box-set of the first three *Raisers* is a reminder of the quality canyon between early highs and later lows, and a warning of the perils of pursuing more for more's sake.

Even the American-dubbed voices in Barker's 1987 original can't sully its subtextual depths. An infidelity in a grotty north London house between pervy Frank (Sean Chapman) and shoulder-padded stepmom Julia (Clare Higgins) offers the anchoring stuff of domestic drama: it just so happens that Frank needs new skin, after his lusts led him to open the box on Doug Bradley's lattice-worked S&M Cenobite (not yet called Pinhead) and friends.

With Barker summoning still-startling visions and Ashley Laurence tackling the young role with intensity, *Raiser* offered

thrilling departures from staid Brit-horrors and teen slashers. The sequel, *Hellbound*, followed suit – until it didn't. As Kenneth Cranham's knowledge-hungry Dr. Channard raises Julia from her sex'n'death bed, director Tony Randel honours Barker's meeting of mundanity/malevolence: white cotton sits on flayed flesh like hell's own Persil ad.

Such good suffering is wasted when Randel visits hell itself, an overwrought reminder that less is often more. But *Hellbound* is high art beside *Hell On Earth*. Third time round, Pinhead stalks Manhattan clubs and becomes a cackling, pun-packing self-parody. The money-driven aim to go 'total Freddy' is miserably transparent.

The best of the voluminous extras here remind us that *Hellraiser* originated as a passion project. Barker's pains were horror's gains: the long-mooted reboot should look to the source. **Kevin Harley**

EXTRAS > Making Of's > Book > Commentaries > Documentaries > Shorts > Interviews > Galleries > Storyboards > Poster > Art Cards



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

CANDYMAN 1992

Urban myths and mirrors: director Bernard Rose honours Barker's dirty details and vaulting ideas.

MARTYRS 2009

Torture savagely anatomised by Pascal Laugier, once pegged to direct the *Hellraiser* remake. Jesus wept...

IT FOLLOWS 2014

Sex, demons, rippling ambiguity: David Robert Mitchell's breakout shares Barker's full-bore ingenuity.



GRAVITY: SPECIAL EDITION 12

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

2013 OUT NOW BD

ALFONSO CUARÓN'S STUNNING SPACE-survival epic gets a second Blu-ray outing. The three hours of behind-the-scenes material included first time round are all present here, so why the double-dip? New extras are 40-minute doc 'Looking To The Stars' – a look at the 'evolution' of space movies that just goes to show quite how groundbreaking *Gravity* was – and a new 'Silent Space' version of the film. Cuarón introduces it as a "rewarding experiment", but the absence of Steven Price's subtle score does rob the film's set-pieces of vital dramatic tension. An interesting experiment, then, but not one worth shelling out for if you own it already. **Richard Jordan**

EXTRAS > Documentaries

> 'Silent Space' version



BLACK GIRL/ BOROM SARRET 15

Films ★★★★★ / ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1966/63 OUT NOW DUAL FORMAT

TWO EARLY FILMS FROM SENEGAL-BORN Ousman Sembène, often called – with good reason – 'the father of African cinema'. Both show his abiding concern for the poor and disregarded of Africa. In 20-minute short *Borom Sarret* a guy scraping a living with his horse and rickety cart gets exploited, and has his cart impounded by an officious cop. Equally exploited is the heroine of *Black Girl* – invited by a white family to come to France and look after their kids, she finds she's treated as an all-purpose domestic slave. The films pulsate with compassion and searing anger. **Philip Kemp**

EXTRAS > Documentaries > Interview > Booklet



SPARROWS CAN'T SING PG

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1963 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD

JOAN LITTLEWOOD SERVES UP A RIGHT old Cockney knees-up in this slightly-softened adaptation of her bracing Theatre Workshop success, notable not just for its stellar ensemble but also for the snapshot it takes of the post-war East End. Barbara Windsor, all brass and boobs as the Stepney lass caught out when volatile hubby James Booth returns from the sea, cuts a more reflective figure in the accompanying Q&A, recorded at the NFT shortly after the death of the film's writer, Stephen Lewis, better known as *On The Buses*' Blakey. **Neil Smith**

EXTRAS > Featurette > Gallery > Interviews



THIEVES' HIGHWAY 12

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1949 **OUT NOW** DVD

JULES DASSIN'S LAST AMERICAN MOVIE before his Hollywood blacklist highlights why he was considered so subversive. Superficially, it's a thriller in which Richard Conte's war vet avenges his father, disabled by Lee J. Cobb's crooked businessman. Yet Dassin goes deep on the story's unusual milieu, the fruit & veg markets of San Francisco, to deliver a pessimistic vision of all-American trade, revealing a parasitic economy of hustlers and whores. The noir shadows hide the roots of the socially conscious thrillers of Lumet and Chander. **Simon Kinnear**

EXTRAS > Documentary > Booklet > Video Essay



THE NAKED PREY 12

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1966 **OUT NOW** DUAL FORMAT

FINEST OF CORNEL WILDE'S MOVIES as producer-director-star, *Prey's* set in 19th Century Africa where, on safari, the Man (Wilde) unintentionally pisses off a native tribe. They slaughter all his companions, then give him a sporting chance: to see if he, stripped naked, can outrun a batch of their warriors. Yes, it's the old *The Most Dangerous Game/Run For The Sun* set-up but Wilde, shooting entirely in Africa, brings to it taut pacing and plenty of gory details. He looks pretty fit for a 51-year-old, too. In his substantial intro, historian Sheldon Hall fills us in on the shambolic shoot. **Philip Kemp**

EXTRAS > Intro > Booklet



THE FALCON AND THE SNOWMAN 15

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1985 **OUT NOW** BD

TIMOTHY HUTTON AND SEAN PENN star in this '70s-set true-life espionage tale about two American childhood friends, Christopher Boyce and Daulton Lee, who sold secrets to the KGB. A pallid-looking Penn makes a distinct impression as Lee, a small-time coke-dealer who brazenly walks into a Soviet embassy with intel from Hutton's Boyce, a disillusioned defence contractor who loves falconry more than his country. It never quite takes flight, but veteran helmer John Schlesinger still adeptly mingles humour, tension and polemic. **James Mottram**

EXTRAS > None



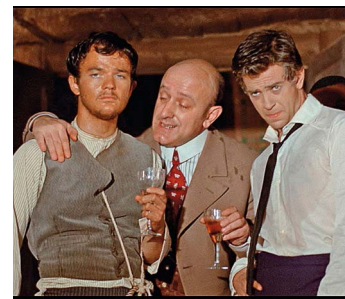
THE IMMORTAL STORY 15

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1968 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD

MADE FOR TV, THE IMMORTAL STORY certainly feels a lot more talky and staged than the best films from Orson Welles (who directs, writes and co-stars), though the auteur's trademark stylistic flourishes remain visible. His rich old character becomes fixated on staging in real life an oft-told story about a similarly rich old man who pays a stranger to impregnate his wife. There are enough interesting ideas to make this for more than just Welles completists, although, given that production tales are half the interest in any Welles feature, the absence of extras is disappointing. **Stephen Puddicombe**

EXTRAS > None



REQUIESCENT 15

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1967 **OUT NOW** BD

OUR PROTAGONIST (LOU CASTEL) IS no ordinary sharpshooter. Raised by a preacher, he ritualistically says a prayer after killing whichever bad guy has stepped in his way. Similarly, *Requiescant* is no ordinary spaghetti western. Director Carlo Lizzani seems less concerned with flashy set-pieces than he is in ideas about freedom and revolution, both for the Mexicans essentially enslaved by a Southern aristocrat (Mark Damon), and the women forced into prostitution. Its moral seriousness sets this film apart in a genre usually characterised by amorality. **Stephen Puddicombe**

EXTRAS > Interviews



EDGAR ALLAN POE'S BLACK CATS 18

Films ★★★★★ / ★★★★★

Extras ★★★★★

1950 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD

TWO LOOSE, LURID POE ADAPTATIONS on this double disc, with 250 minutes of extras. Sergio Martino's excellent *Your Vice Is A Locked Room And Only I Have The Key* is a seminal giallo with all the stabby interludes and sexual intrigue that implies. Lucio Fulci's diverting *The Black Cat*, meanwhile, transports the director's feverish style to a bizarrely Eurotrash English village and, unlike his wilder efforts, seems almost quaint. Poe, you imagine, would confusedly approve. **Matt Glasby**

EXTRAS > Commentary (*Black Cat*) > Featurettes > Booklet



THE LADYKILLERS – 60TH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTOR'S EDITION U

Film ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

1955 **OUT NOW** BD

"THERE WERE ONLY FIVE OF US," ALEC Guinness' would-be criminal mastermind sighs sorrowfully, on being up against the terrifying nemesis who's put paid to his gang's cunning heist. That nemesis? Well, never underestimate sweet little old ladies (especially in the shape of sublime Katie Johnson), as *The Ladykillers* makes clear. What an absolute delight Ealing's blackly comic noir is, 60 this year, with future nods to everything from Python to *Shallow Grave*. **Ali Catterall**

EXTRAS > Commentary > Documentaries > Interviews > Featurettes > Gallery

TV

Hell's belle

The inside line on Jessica Jones, Marvel's new Netflix TV series...

INT. BAR – HELL'S KITCHEN. NIGHT. A dark-haired woman bowls inside just as a fight erupts. The bartender – big, imposing – trades blows with drunk patrons. The woman hurls a guy across a table. Breaks another guy's hand. Within minutes, groaning bodies litter the floor. The woman and the bartender share a look, recognising that this isn't exactly normal...

"I actually did punch somebody in the face by accident," laughs Krysten Ritter, the dark-haired pugilist in question, chatting to *Lounge* six months after shooting that scrap on location in New York City. "I didn't mean to, accidents happen! I punched a stunt guy, and I sent him a bottle of whisky to apologise. Honestly, I think he got a kick out of it. I feel like the stunt guys like it a little bit..."

That, or perhaps this stunt guy was understandably intimidated by Marvel's

latest superhero. After all, Jessica Jones isn't somebody you mess with. Sarcastic, abrasive, always ready to throw a punch (or a barbed one-liner), she's the star of the studio's second Netflix TV series, which arrives in the wake of *Daredevil*'s acclaimed first season. Set in the same neighbourhood – Hell's Kitchen – *Jessica Jones* is equally as dark, following the titular private eye, an ex-superhero who snoops on behalf of freelance clients and sniffy attorney Jeri Hogarth (Carrie-Anne Moss). At least, that's what she does when she's not drinking herself unconscious.

"Because of her dark past, she can really see the darkness in others," explains showrunner Melissa Rosenberg (*Dexter*, *Dark Skies*). "What she's lacking is the ability to see the good in people. She's a pessimist by nature." They're characteristics drawn directly from Brian Michael Bendis' R-rated 2001 comic, *Alias*, but Rosenberg also

references *Chinatown* as a tonal touchstone for a show steeped in gorgeous noir imagery. It also fosters a foreboding sense of paranoia, not least when Jones is drawn into a case involving dangerous mind manipulator Kilgrave (David Tennant), who may hold the key to her traumatic past.

Psychological warfare

Rosenberg initially pitched the show to ABC back in 2010, when Marvel TV boss Jeph Loeb gave her a copy of *Alias*, and she'd had her eye on Ritter to star ever since. Though Ritter was best known for comedies like *Don't Trust The B---- In Apartment 23*, her role as Jesse's girlfriend in *Breaking Bad* proved she wasn't all sweetness and light. "The *Breaking Bad* role was like, 'Oooh-kay, I get it, you're dark. You can go deep,'" Rosenberg recalls. "The range that she displays in this show is just extraordinary."

For Ritter, it was a no-brainer. After



Me and Miss Jones: Jessica Jones (Krysten Ritter) is joined by Jeri Hogarth (Carrie-Anne Moss) and (left) Trish Walker (Rachael Taylor).



‘Daredevil is super-violent and has a lot of fights; in Jessica Jones the violence is more psychological’

KRYSTEN RITTER

“They’re opposites, yet they have the same fucking thing they can’t tell anybody about,” Ritter says. “They’re, in a way, the same person. I love their relationship. A lot of it exists in the quietness, in the subtext. And I love me some Mike Colter.” Colter’s getting his own solo series next year (it’s currently shooting), but Jessica Jones is notable as the first female Marvel superhero to get her own series – and this also marks the first time a Marvel character has been brought to the screen by an almost entirely female team.

Crossing the teams

“Don’t mess it up!” laughs Rosenberg on how it feels to be the first woman to pull up a chair in Marvel’s hitherto all-boys’ club. “It’s incredibly inspiring and I’m utterly delighted and honoured to be here! I think women have earned their place in the canon, but it’s also a great deal of responsibility, which I know Krysten feels as well.”

reading the script in secret (“Jeph Loeb locked me in a room, took away my cell phone”), she was struck by the strength of Rosenberg’s story, and in particular how different it was from *Daredevil*.

“That show is super-violent and has a lot of fights and cool stunts and shit,” she says. “And *Jessica Jones* is a much more character-driven thriller, where the violence is more psychological.”

“There’s a need for redemption, which is a very traditional, heroic drive,” adds Rosenberg, “but buried on top of that are so many wrong moves, so many mistakes and bad choices... It’s quite fun trying to get there.” Perhaps hindering more than helping Jones on her road to redemption is that imposing bartender, who just so happens to be Luke Cage (Mike Colter), another Marvel hero. Where Jones possesses superhuman strength, Cage seems almost indestructible.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

BREAKING BAD 2008-13

Ritter takes a huge bite out of the show’s second season as Jessie’s druggy squeeze.

AGENT CARTER 2014-

Marvel’s other female-led TV series is a pacy, period thrill ride.

DAREDEVIL 2015-

Marvel’s first Netflix TV series, starring Charlie Cox, is deliciously dark and addictive.

Not half, though Ritter is more excited than nervous. “This is amazing in so many ways,” she enthuses.

“It feels very groundbreaking, very exciting. I would love for a generation, the girls coming up behind me, to be inspired by this character. There can be strong, amazing female antiheroes and complex characters we can root for. Jessica Jones is so unique.”

While Jones will eventually team up with *Daredevil*, Luke Cage and Iron Fist in mini-series *The Defenders*, Lounge can’t help wondering how she’d react to meeting the Avengers. “I think she might think they’re a little full of themselves and a little glossy,” Rosenberg muses. And Ritter? “Erm... I can’t talk about any spoilers,” she says. This is about to get very interesting...

Josh Winning

ETA | 20 NOVEMBER All episodes of *Jessica Jones* Season 1 will debut on Netflix this month.



Hardboiled Peg

All's well that's Atwell.

AGENT CARTER: SEASON 1 12

Show ★★★★★ Extras N/A

2015 **OUT 30 NOVEMBER** DVD, BD, DIGITAL HD

AFTER A STUMBLING START with season one of *Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.* (things improved with the sophomore season), Marvel Television looked to Ms. Peggy Carter to step capably in. She aced it, paving the way for Daredevil to strut his impressive stuff and suggesting we can expect great things from *Jessica Jones*.

Set in New York, 1946, *Agent Carter* sees Peggy tasked with performing menial duties in the office of the Strategic Scientific Reserve (SSR). She's lumped with lunch orders and chauvinistic put-downs as alpha agent Jack Thompson (Chad Michael Murray) and the boys chase Howard Stark (Dominic Cooper), on the run after being accused of selling weapons to the highest bidder. How does Peggy keep her sanity and self-worth? By secretly teaming up with Stark's butler Edwin Jarvis (James D'Arcy) to clear Howard's name and find those that framed him...

Mixing comic-book sci-fi, post-war espionage and screwball comedy to

winning effect, Marvel's *Agent Carter* is spry and spruce. Sure, the 'death' of Peggy's beau, Steve Rogers, hangs over our heroine throughout (we revisit footage from *Captain America: The First Avenger* to see Cap plunge his plane into the Arctic), but this is a smartly dressed, snappily designed world that brims with adventure, intrigue and derring-do – one of the key influences is *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*.

Created by *Captain America: Civil War* scribes Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely, the show fits into the existing architecture of the MCU while allowing Atwell to finally flex as Peggy. She excels in every area – verbal jousting, problem solving, kicking ass – and the liberal sprinkling of feminism is as timely now as it was in 1946, when women surveyed a new landscape after slipping social shackles while menfolk were off fighting the war. Season 2 promises Peggy in Los Angeles in 1947, tackling the nuclear threat. Bring it. **Jamie Graham**

EXTRAS > **TBC**



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

WONDER WOMAN

1975-1979

Lynda Carter's iconic crimefighter started off in the '40s before being updated to the '70s.

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

1997-2003

The success of Sarah Michelle Gellar's action heroine led to tie-in novels, comics and videogames.

DAREDEVIL 2015

Eye-opening proof that Marvel's TV could match Marvel's movies.



PENNY DREADFUL: SEASON 2 18

Show ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

2015 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD

STILL DRIPPING HANDSOME PERIOD style (and copious gore), this brooding Victorian horror-drama has its work cut out servicing its many plot strands (a werewolf hunt, death-dealing witches, Frankenstein's mutinous monsters). Thankfully, Helen McCrory's charmingly malevolent hell-hag and her coven prove worthy adversaries for Eva Green and Timothy Dalton's posh posse of witch-hunters. Billie Piper's emergence as a kind of Jackie The Ripper is worth the wait. But Green's supernaturally tortured performance, enriched by her slow-burn romance with Josh Hartnett's soul-searching gunslinger, is alone worth the price of the boxset. **Kate Stables**

EXTRAS > **Featurettes** > **Character profiles** > **Production blogs**



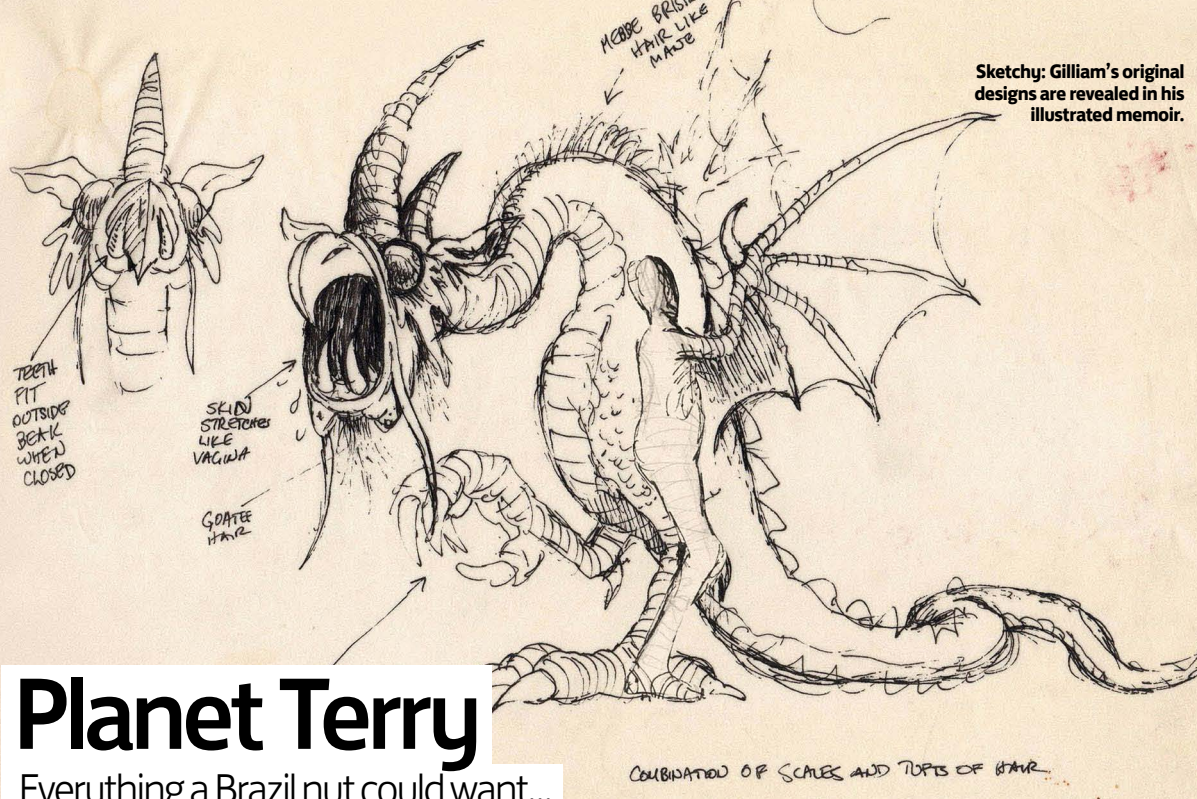
HANNIBAL: SEASON 3 18

Show ★★★★★ Extras ★★★★★

2015 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, DIGITAL HD

HANNIBAL'S THIRD – AND SADLY FINAL – season is one of two halves. The first follows the titular cannibal in a loose adaptation of Thomas Harris' *Hannibal*; the second is a typically baroque retelling of *Red Dragon*, starring Richard Armitage as the creepiest version of 'Tooth Fairy' Francis Dolarhyde we've yet seen. More than ever, Season 3 sees showrunner Bryan Fuller pushing the limits of network TV. But for all the blackly comic avant-garde weirdness, the main draw is still the combo of Hugh Dancy's Will Graham and Mads Mikkelsen's Hannibal Lecter – one of the most messed-up romances ever screened. **Richard Jordan**

EXTRAS > **None**



Sketchy: Gilliam's original designs are revealed in his illustrated memoir.

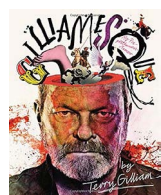
Planet Terry

Everything a Brazil nut could want...

GILLIAMESQUE: A PRE-POSTHUMOUS MEMOIR

Book ★★★★★

TERRY GILLIAM | Canongate



WHEN TERRY Gilliam was a boy, a dog fell on his head. It's exactly the sort of surreal happenstance you'd expect from one of his *Monty Python* animations (the ones that made heavy use of Ronnie Barker's saucy Victorian postcard collection). And as recounted in this sprawling, richly illustrated memoir, it's as good a starting point as

any to show how formative experience might mould an artist's vision.

This is less straight autobiography, however, than a fascinating delve into the director's working methods, from *Holy Grail* to *Zero Theorem*, and his influences – including Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, Michael Powell's *Thief Of Bagdad* (which “scarred” him), and religion: for the guy who says of *Life Of Brian*, it “caused so much trouble, I was in heaven”, the King James Bible clearly

proved creative rocket-fuel too – along with scatological images doodled in the margins of manuscripts by medieval monks. There are some great anecdotes: for *Brazil*, Robert De Niro insisted on sitting in on brain operations after Gilliam had described his character's approach to plumbing as “surgical”.

Naturally, the events surrounding that infamously put-upon masterpiece make sobering reading, and if the director admits there are really two Gilliams – the crowd-pleaser vs the protective artist – it's the latter iteration we're more familiar with; the one whose occasional misstep we forgive, because, well, it's Terry. And as he stresses, he likes and embraces the flaws anyway. Really, it just makes him all the more endearing. **Ali Catterall**

THE JAMES BOND SONGS

Book ★★☆☆☆

ADRIAN DAUB & CHARLES

KRONENGOLD | Oxford University Press

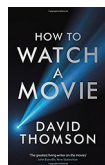


WHAT CAN THE SONGS accompanying 007's titles tell us about modern pop and the ever-changing world in which we live in? Not much, despite this tome's authors insisting they're “anthems of late capitalism... for people afraid of the future”. There's plenty more theorising where that came from: Daub and Kronengold, for example, go to town with Madonna's Sigmund Freud shout-out on ‘Die Another Day’. Next to Jon Burlingame's superlative 2012 chronicle *The Music Of James Bond*, alas, this is one long bum note. **Neil Smith**

HOW TO WATCH A MOVIE

Book ★★★★★

DAVID THOMSON | Profile Books



LONG CROWNED A KING of criticism, the ever-iconoclastic Thomson pays no heed to a “tidy pantheon” of rules. Instead he offers a reflection on a lifetime of movie-going, at once rewardingly philosophical and entertainingly gossipy. Thomson's essential point is that “to watch movies properly you have to watch yourself watching,” analysing shots for emotional or ideological impact rather than as technical tools. Sex, violence and money recur across often surprising examples: who knew that Thomson adores Tom Hardy in *Locke*? **Simon Kinnear**

TOM HARDY: RISE OF A LEGEND

Book ★★☆☆☆

JAMES HAYDOCK | John Blake Publishing



THOSE LOOKING FOR deep or fresh insight into the life of enigmatic star Tom Hardy would do well to look elsewhere than this run-of-the-mill, sycophantic overview of the actor's career. Skipping over his troubled adolescence in just the first chapter and giving only cursory mentions of his problems with drink and drugs, this instead reads like an exercise in collecting interviews, which the author over-relies upon to fill in the blanks. Well-researched it may be, but the padding narrative is too erratic to illuminate. **Matt Looker**

Three more...

Del Toro, domesticated aliens and ‘Dirt Dancing’...

CRIMSON PEAK: THE ART OF DARKNESS

★★★★★



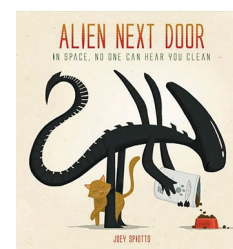
Predictably edible-looking exploration of the designed-to-the-nines spooker from Guillermo del Toro. Goes that extra mile with inserts including biogs, ‘vintage’ photos... and just when you think it's all over, there's an envelope with a free poster inside.

MOVIE TITLE TYPOS

★★★★★



Titles with one letter missing, half of which sound like reality shows: ‘Pretty In Ink’, ‘The Fat And The Furious’, ‘My Big Fat Geek Wedding’. Kind of pricey for what's essentially a Reddit gallery in book form, but there are worse stocking fillers.



ALIEN NEXT DOOR

★★★★★

According to the intro, the late H.R. Giger was up for doing an *Alien*-inspired kids' book. This honours that lost dream with cute – but not cutesy – cartoons of a smiley xenomorph golfing, painting, mowing the lawn in a beer hat etc.

Ennio Morricone

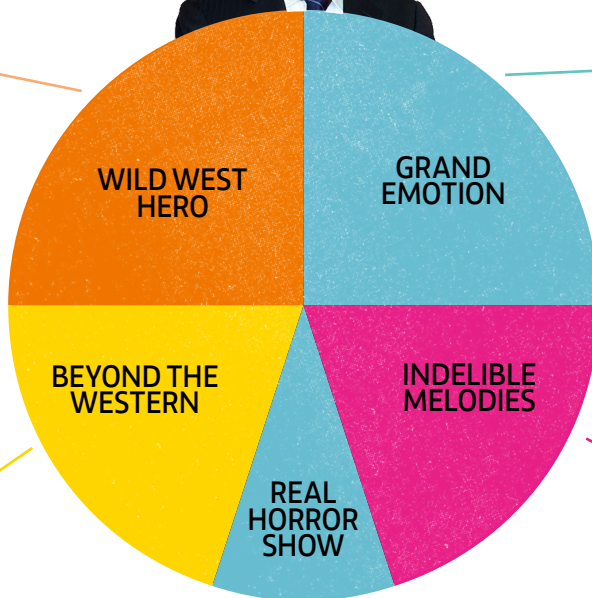
Whistle while you work...



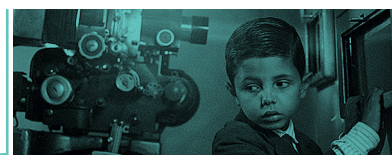
"Western films account for just eight per cent of my production," Morricone has argued. Fair point, but measured by influence the Italian composer's trailblazing work for Sergio Leone's *Dollars* trilogy and *Once Upon A Time In The West* deserve a bigger percentage. Morricone weaved unorthodox sounds (gunshots, watch ticks, coyote howls...) into the soundtrack's fabric with sizzling guitars, none-more-cool whistling and soaring vocals. Big fan Quentin Tarantino employed Morricone for *The Hateful Eight*.



Boasting 500-plus credits for directors from Mario Bava to Terrence Malick, Morricone is one madly prolific maestro. He scored social cinema, marshalling martial drums for *The Battle Of Algiers* and beyond, while finding time for comedies, dramatic epics, sci-fi, crime movies, war films, political dramas and more (yes, even *Red Sonja*), including a Leone reunion for the staggeringly affecting *Once Upon A Time In America* score. He tours – he'll be at The O2 in January – and composes outside film, too.



Morricone's operatic emoting found perfect footing with horrors and Italian 'giallos', notably Dario Argento's deep scarlet cine-symphonies. The quietly creepy score for Argento's *The Bird With The Crystal Plumage* counterpoints beauty with implicit, stalking threat, and despite director John Carpenter's rumoured disappointment, Morricone's score for 1982's *The Thing* is a chilly masterpiece of mood.



The film critic Anthony Lane called Morricone the "conjurer of the beautiful" with good reason. For all the swagger and broil of his western and war themes, Morricone's music drips with feeling. Between pan-flutes and soaring choirs, his score for Roland Joffé's *The Mission* achieved hit-sized transcendence, though it lost at the Oscars to Herbie Hancock's *Round Midnight*. None of Morricone's lone scores have won Oscars, though his Giuseppe Tornatore work – *Cinema Paradiso*, *Malèna* – really should have.



A flawless melodic sensibility powers Morricone's scores, often beyond their parent films. Even western amateurs know "Ah-ee-ah-ee-ah". Elsewhere, his pop nous is impeccable: the dreamy theme from 1969's *Dirty Angels* ("Matto, giro, giro girotondo...") is pure ear-wormery, while the variously jaunty, arch-lounge and guitar-twanging themes for *Love Circle*, *The Sicilian Clan* and *Danger: Diabolik* are instantly recognisable. Older Morricone pieces have also been borrowed for the likes of *Kill Bill* and *Election*. **KH**

Key movies



A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS

1964 ★★★★★

New kind of west, new kind of score. With haunting restraint and innovative sounds (whistling, bells, guitar...), Morricone's first Leone is a masterclass in mood-building.



ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST

1968 ★★★★★

Harrored harmonica, savage guitars, swelling strings: played on-set to invoke a mood, Morricone's career best shares operatic qualities with Leone's cine-dream of America.



THE MISSION

1986 ★★★★★

Pan flutes, tribal percussion, epic choirs: flexing huge power in restraint, Morricone's wide-ranging score for the religious epic is his '80s best (yep, better than *Red Sonja*).



THE UNTOUCHABLES

1987 ★★★★★

Despite their fall-outs over the "triumph of the police" music, Morricone's score for Brian De Palma's Al Capone movie is a thing of jazzy-fresh joy, both epic and playful.

Vital statistics

76

Choir members on recent My Life In Music tour.

5

Failed Oscar nominations: one honorary award.

2

UK chart placing for 'Chi Mai' in 1981.

527

TV/film credits listed on IMDb.

'Scorsese's drop-off in quality and audacity is inescapable'

RANT

Is it just me?

...or has Scorsese not made a good film since GoodFellas? *asks Neil Smith*

OFFICE-OMETER

The TF staff verdict is in!

THERE WAS SOME disappointment at this year's Venice Film Festival when it emerged that Martin Scorsese's new work wouldn't be ready in time. Yet the work in question – a 15-minute short made to promote a casino resort in Macau – to me seems sadly symptomatic of a directorial career that's increasingly looking in need of fresh inspiration. Where did it all go wrong?

The answer is 1990, the year he gave us his undisputed masterpiece *GoodFellas*. An unforgettable portrait of one mobster's journey from crook to schnook, it marked not just a perfect synthesis of content and technique but also the crowning glory of a 25-year purple period that saw him churn out one American classic after another. *Mean Streets*, *Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*: these were the films of a hungry, angry auteur, an ambitious talent exorcising unquiet demons. Even the movies that didn't sear the screen – *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, for example, or 1985's *After Hours* – possessed a restless, questing energy that makes them ripe for reappraisal, for all their flaws, longueurs and tonal inconsistencies.

Compare Scorsese's first quarter-century as a filmmaker to his second, however, and the drop-off in quality and audacity is inescapable. *Cape Fear* was the first warning sign, a trashily commercial remake full of lurid misjudgements. Then came *The Age Of Innocence*, a yawningly dull stab at arthouse respectability that made Merchant Ivory look animated in contrast. *Casino*, a cynical attempt to relive former gangster glories, was full of flab. And then the rot really set in: *Kundun*, *Bringing Out The Dead* and the risible *Gangs Of New York* showed a helmer in total creative freefall.

Where the Marty of yesteryear took pains to innovate, the Scorsese of today merely imitates. What is *Hugo* if not a facsimile of Spielbergian whimsy, or *The Wolf Of Wall Street* besides an appropriation of Oliver Stone's mojo? *Shutter Island* is Sam Fuller's *Shock Corridor* in everything but name; *The Aviator* a winsome love letter to a Hollywood

long gone. And then there are the films that have next to no personality at all, like *Shine A Light*: a Rolling Stones concert documentary that any hack-for-hire could've knocked out in a lunch hour.

Which brings me to *The Departed*, the film that won Scorsese his Oscar... 16 years too late. A textbook example of the Academy's habit of honouring their own for the wrong darn movie, this bloated rehash of a far superior original is everything that is wrong with Scorsese. Would the Marty of old have tolerated Jack Nicholson's grandstanding, or DiCaprio's Bah-staan accent? When Scorsese jokingly asked on Oscar night that they "check the envelope", he was unwittingly speaking for everybody who could not believe it was this – a virtual parody – he was finally being honoured for.

Only a mook could argue his best days aren't behind him.

Or is it just me?

Agree or disagree?
Tell us on Facebook and Twitter, or at www.gamesradar.com/totalfilm



IT'S JUST YOU
IT'S NOT JUST YOU

LAST MONTH...

In TF239, Matt Looker argued that *Tron: Legacy* is actually pretty great. You respond...

TONY BUFTON

A solid three out of five sequel. No masterpiece but no stinker either. Great viewed on a decent home cinema set-up, I suspect.

MARK BRADFORD

Very underrated! And good to

see something that isn't based on a Marvel or DC character!

ASOKAN NIRMALAJAH

Great for that first hour until the plot kicks in and ruins everything. Until then, an abstract masterpiece.

PIETRO LUIGIO O'TOOLE

Best soundtrack I've heard and very underrated film. People complain too much!

EZANIEYUSOFF

The article made me want to listen to the soundtrack again.

MERCURY RAPIDS

It's pretty good – and let's not forget the original isn't that great.

JAMES MARSH

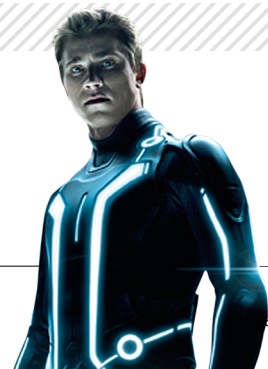
It's fun, and that's all that matters.

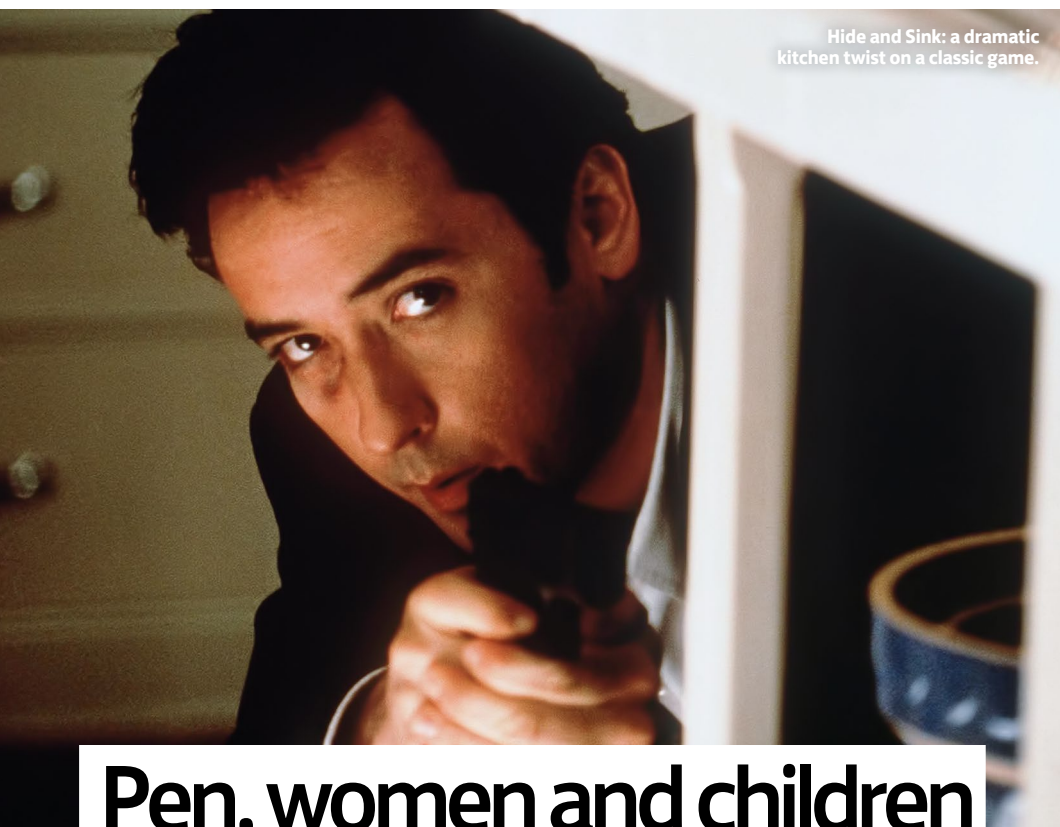
LUIS ANGEL TORRES

The music is great and the visuals are stunning; apart from that it's good, but it's NO masterpiece.

LONNIE BOOTH

It's shite.





Hide and Sink: a dramatic kitchen twist on a classic game.

Pen, women and children

GROSSE POINTE BLANK | Cusack's killer ad-nib...

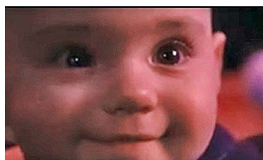
BRAVING HIS HIGH SCHOOL reunion, acerbic assassin Martin Q. Blank (John Cusack) must fend off well-wishers, bully Bob Destepello (Michael

Cudlitz) and contract killer Felix La Pubelle (Benny "The Jet" Urquidez) while attempting to woo Debi Newberry (Minnie Driver), the one that got away. Question is, will *they* get away?



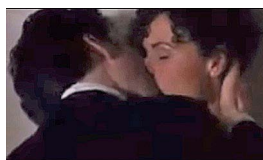
a pen. They tour the hall, meeting...

1 Blank and Debi head straight to the bar, where divorce lawyer Ken (Carlos Jacott) gives Martin



wingman Paul (Jeremy Piven), bully Bob, and little baby Robbie...

2 ...a (somewhat thematically relevant) near-death experience survivor (Jenna Elfman), Blank's loyal



out in the nurse's station. Blank goes to check out his old locker...

3 Upstairs, Blank confesses he still dreams about Debi. They dance, then make



to "do some blow". They hug it out...

4 But bellicose Bob waylays him. Blank talks him down. Bob reads a poem and asks if he wants



hard, punching, clawing and slamming their bodies against the lockers.

5 At the lockers, La Pubelle attacks. Blank kicks away his gun, and they go at each other



watches, horrified. A blood-spattered Blank pleads: "It's not me..." **Matt Glasby**

6 Blank goes down, but flips La Pubelle, kneels on him and rams the pen into his throat. Debi

THE SCREENPLAY

Based on a treatment by Tom Jankiewicz, the shooting script was thrashed out by Cusack, co-writers/stars Steve Pink (Terry) and D.V. DeVincentis (Dan), and director George Armitage. "Mostly I was tightening things up and John was expanding things," says Armitage, who didn't apply for credit because of strict Writers' Guild guidelines. "We actually shot three different movies," he explains. One "broad", one "realistic" and a third representing whatever "mood we were in at the time".

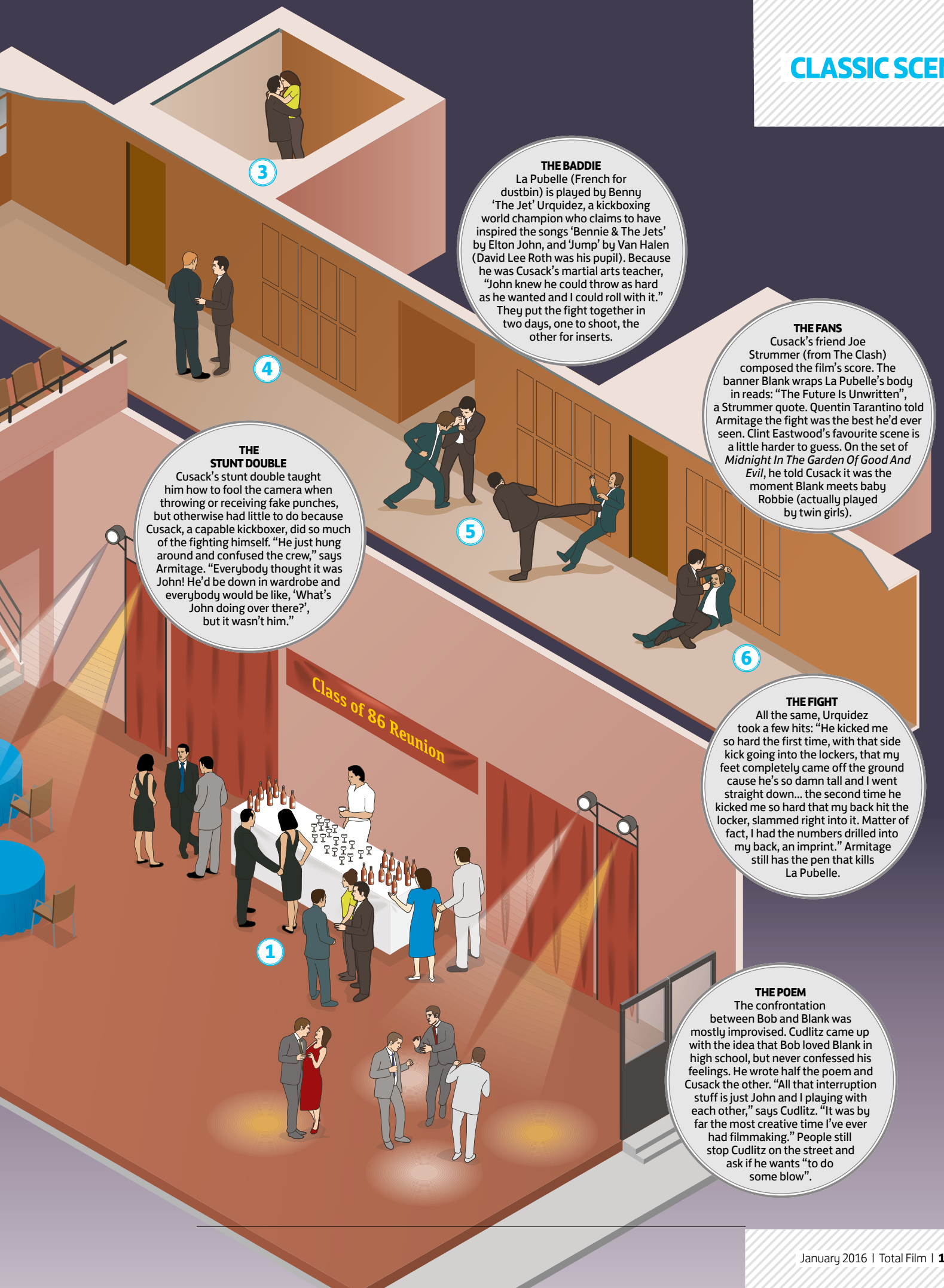
THE IMPROV

Armitage would shoot the scenes as written, then an improvised version. So the footage matched, he told the actors to stand still every time they went off-script. "If they're moving you're in trouble, you can't cut it, it's going to look jumpy, it's going to jar the audience," he says. "But there's ways to do it so it looks smooth. I mean, there were a few things that bothered me, but nobody else seemed to notice."

THE SUPPORTING CAST

Driver was hot property after *Circle Of Friends*; she and Cusack became romantically involved post-filming. The lady with the neck brace is *Dharma And Greg*'s Jenna Elfman in her first movie role. Michael Cudlitz was working as a labourer on set before he was cast. Of Bob's inimitable dance moves, he says: "That's my own choreography, you can't choreograph that stuff, man!" Problem was: "I threw my back out. I came into work the next day and I couldn't move."

Grosse Pointe Blank is available on DVD, Blu-ray and VOD now.



3

THE BADDIE

La Pubelle (French for dustbin) is played by Benny 'The Jet' Urquidez, a kickboxing world champion who claims to have inspired the songs 'Bennie & The Jets' by Elton John, and 'Jump' by Van Halen (David Lee Roth was his pupil). Because he was Cusack's martial arts teacher, "John knew he could throw as hard as he wanted and I could roll with it." They put the fight together in two days, one to shoot, the other for inserts.

4

THE STUNT DOUBLE

Cusack's stunt double taught him how to fool the camera when throwing or receiving fake punches, but otherwise had little to do because Cusack, a capable kickboxer, did so much of the fighting himself. "He just hung around and confused the crew," says Armitage. "Everybody thought it was John! He'd be down in wardrobe and everybody would be like, 'What's John doing over there?', but it wasn't him."

5

THE FANS

Cusack's friend Joe Strummer (from The Clash) composed the film's score. The banner Blank wraps La Pubelle's body in reads: "The Future Is Unwritten", a Strummer quote. Quentin Tarantino told Armitage the fight was the best he'd ever seen. Clint Eastwood's favourite scene is a little harder to guess. On the set of *Midnight In The Garden Of Good And Evil*, he told Cusack it was the moment Blank meets baby Robbie (actually played by twin girls).

6

THE FIGHT

All the same, Urquidez took a few hits: "He kicked me so hard the first time, with that side kick going into the lockers, that my feet completely came off the ground cause he's so damn tall and I went straight down... the second time he kicked me so hard that my back hit the locker, slammed right into it. Matter of fact, I had the numbers drilled into my back, an imprint." Armitage still has the pen that kills La Pubelle.

1

THE POEM

The confrontation between Bob and Blank was mostly improvised. Cudlitz came up with the idea that Bob loved Blank in high school, but never confessed his feelings. He wrote half the poem and Cusack the other. "All that interruption stuff is just John and I playing with each other," says Cudlitz. "It was by far the most creative time I've ever had filmmaking." People still stop Cudlitz on the street and ask if he wants "to do some blow".



TF saves you a night out every month. This issue: we bring you up to (light)speed on **Star Wars: Episodes I-VI...**



SPOILER ALERT!

FADE IN:

INT: HUGE FLOATING DOUGHNUT

EWAN MCGREGOR

I have an 'I've signed away years of my life to look constipated in front of green screen' feeling about this...

LIAM NEESON

I don't sense anything... Probably 'cos I'm one and done, innit?

EXT: NABOO SWAMP
EWAN and LIAM encounter the biggest Na-boob of all.

AHMED BEST

Fart noise! Ear-chafing nonsense! Something about stepping in shit!

EXT: CORUSCANT
Suddenly it's like we're watching BBC Parliament for nine hours with the occasional Wookiee backbencher.

JAKE LLOYD

Liam, I heard Kermit's grandad croaking some guff about 'midi-chlorians'... I've been wondering, is it literally only George Lucas who gives a rat's arse what they are?

INT: NABOO CATWALK PALACE
The greatest lightsaber fight you will ever see.

Intercut with one giant waste of pixels twatting another giant waste of pixels.

Ten years later: EWAN has become the world's first Jedi BeeGee and JAKE has grown into a long streak of p... onytail.

HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN

I'm in agony, Natalie. George has given me pages of flowery bollocks to say. Stuff about wishing I could wash away my wishes like last night's dirty dishes and...

NATALIE PORTMAN

Just knock me up already. Giving birth to a Bantha couldn't be more painful than listening to you.

HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN

Ok, but let me really seal the deal by slaughtering an entire campsite.

INT: THE ARENA FROM GLADIATOR, BUT WITH DROOLING BUG-MEN INSTEAD OF DEREK JACOBI

FRANK OZ

Knock you out, mama said! Shame she didn't beat me over the head with a book of grammar too, but ho-heh.

All-out, galaxy-consuming war breaks out... off screen.

IAN MCDIARMID

Hayden, I have something of a dark side... I'm prone to the odd Sithy-fit... Seriously, do I need to get 'LORD EVIL BASTARD' stencilled on my forehead before you guys cotton on?

NATALIE PORTMAN

Oh Ewan, Hayden's had a right old turn - he's somehow managed to make infanticide look comical!

HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN

Die, you Obi-Wanker!

We now enter a new era of tyranny. And watchability.

CARRIE FISHER

Help me, Sir Alec: I'm looking at four decades of answering questions about my side-buns and that sodding tin bikini.

EXT: MOS EISLEY SPACEPORT
Original edition: a sparse backwater town
Special edition: FUCKING MONSTERS EVERYWHERE

HARRISON FORD

Monkey-chops here tells me you're lookin' for someone the audience can perv over while you lot are trying to fight tennis balls in the dark.

The rebels stick one up the Emperor's exhaust port and move to Planet Yeti.

In their bleakest hour, MARK HAMILL buggers off to Muppet boot camp.

FRANZ OZ

He is too old to begin the training... but give me a couple of montages and I'll see what I can do.

INT: ZONE OF FALLING

JAMES EARL JONES

So Mark, let me tell you something that'll take your mind off that severed hand...

Years pass: the Rebels prepare to launch the biggest assault ever overseen by a giant fish.

IAN MCDIARMID

Everything is proceeding as I have foreseen... aside from my army getting caned by a gang of bare-bummed Paddingtons, admittedly.

MARK HAMILL

You're coming with me, Dad... I need an adult to buy those bloody power converters.

JAMES EARL JONES

Tell your sister... if she ever slips you the tongue again, I'll slap you both sideways!

FIN

NEXT ISSUE: SPECTRE

COMING NEXT ISSUE...
ON SALE 18 DECEMBER

➤ The big TF review of the year! What flew! What blew!

➤ Plus we don our hoods and look deep into our crystal balls...

➤ We pull on our jumpers to engage with a sci-fi-slash-superhero icon...

➤ And share a deskpop or two with a reunited comedy duo!

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